IN THE HEART OF HINDUSTAN

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Workman, Katherine A.
In the heart of Hindustan





S. Gillespie
October, 1925

In the Heart of Hindustan



TAJ MAHAL, AT AGRA, INDIA

In the Heart of Hindustan

Katherine A. Workman

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Dedicated

to the

Undying Memory

of the

Missionary-martyrs

of

Imangah

And I will go, I may no longer doubt
To give up friends and home and idle hopes
And every tender tie that binds my heart
To thee, my country! Why should I regard
Earth's little store of borrowed sweets? I sure
Have had enough of bitter in my cup
To show that never was it His design
Who placed me here that I should live in ease,
Or drink at pleasure's fountain.
Henceforth, then,
It matters not if storm or sunshine be
My earthly lot, bitter or sweet my cup.
I only pray, "God fit me for the work!
God make me holy, and my spirit nerve
For the stern hour of strife!" Let me but know
There is an arm unseen that holds me up,
An eye that kindly watches all my path,
Till I my weary pilgrimage have done;
Let me but know I have a Friend that waits
To welcome me to glory, and I joy
To tread the dark and death-fraught wilderness.

—Selected

CONTENTS

Imangah—The Place of Faith	11
Pilgrims	29
"The Thief Cometh"	41
A Village Meeting	53
Etiquette in Hindustan	62
A Product of Hinduism	71
Casting Out Devils	79
Father and Son	86
Merry-making	95
Things Sacred to India	106
A Village Family	114
"My Bulla Is Not!"	122
The Blossoming of the Bamboo	127
The Chains of Inconsistency	140
Nanki, the Girl Widow	148
A Worship of Frauds	156
A Hole in the Wall	169
Eager Searchers	175
Heathen Taints Still Clinging	184
Outcastes Pro Tempore	191
Novel Indian Remedies	196
Voices of the Night	203
When Pestilence Stalks	213
Devotion to the Gods	222
Mountains in the Missionary's Pathway	231

FOREWORD

IMANGAH—The Place of Faith

I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything, but it came; at some time—no matter at how distant a day—somehow, in some shape—probably the last I should have devised—it came. —Adoniram Judson

THE place which is now called Imangah could have been described in a very few words seventeen years ago.

Some dry-looking fields, very sparsely covered with scraggly grain.

Two mango-trees and one mahuwah tree, giving shade to a few gaunt cows and buffaloes.

Whitish, sandy soil that gave little promise in the way of a crop.

Glancing round to the north, east, south and west, gray mud huts could be seen peeping out from among the trees and indicating villages where the people lived who had tilled these poor fields. Here and there could be seen a well where ill-fed oxen were drawing up water, while half-naked, brown figures moved about

among the grain, making the little ditches to carry the water to the fields that needed it so greatly.

But see—something unusual is happening on this dreary-looking spot to-day. Two white men and a lady have appeared. This is indeed a strange sight in these parts. They are kneeling on the ground and praying to their God, and several native men are standing by with wondering looks on their faces. What does it mean? Just this—that a great change is to take place here, for these people have heard the call of God to establish a lighthouse that will send its light out into the dark lives of the people of this neighborhood.

A few years before an attempt was made to obtain land here. It almost succeeded, but in the end was thwarted by the influence of two ungodly men, supposed to be Christians, who did not believe the people of this country should learn anything about Christianity. Now both those men had died; and in the meantime the determination in the hearts of the missionaries to obey God's call had grown even stronger, and they were ready to move when God pointed once more in this direction. And so the land

was secured, the lease signed, and the former lessees paid off and satisfied.

Within a few days the work began in earnest. Imangah, the place of faith! It looked as though it would take some faith to accomplish anything in such a barren spot—but that grace was not lacking. Strange to say, these people who had secured the land and were expecting to build had no money. In fact, they could scarcely say where the food for the next day was to come from, but they had faith and courage, so they prepared to build. Men and women from the neighboring villages were hired, some to make brick and some to carry logs for the kiln.

Not long after this two tiny tents appeared under the big mahuwah tree. In one of these a man and his wife took up their abode, and in the other a lady and a little orphan girl lived. They had come to oversee the work as it went on, and that they might begin their work among the village people.

Foundations were dug for the first two rooms of the house, and soon the walls began to go up. They were hoping to finish these before the rains should come on, for at that time it

would be impossible to live in tents. Even during the winter with such tents as they had, they were far from safe. The clouds began to gather for the usual winter rains, and the natives came around saying, "It will surely rain, and then what will you do in these frail tents?" But these people were unmoved and only pointed toward the heavens as much as to say that protection as well as rain comes from God. So the clouds continued to gather from day to day, but nothing more than a few drops fell—and the work went on.

Mud and water do not cost much, but as the walls rose higher it meant that beams, bamboos, and tiles must be forthcoming, and there was no money with which to buy them. Here again faith came to the front, and as prayer ascended to heaven it was not long until the money was in hand. Sometimes only one beam at a time could be bought, but as they were needed they came.

All this meant much work for the missionaries, as well as for the brown men who mixed the mud with their feet and carried it in baskets to the walls. But all the time was not spent in building, for as the days and weeks flew by, all

the villages round about were visited by the missionaries, and many of the dwellers there heard the name of Christ for the first time in their lives. Many of them had never seen white people before and were frightened at first; but their fright did not last long, and they soon began to anticipate the visits of the missionaries.

In six months two rooms stood finished—at least they were considered ready to be occupied, although they still lacked doors and windows, there being only holes in the walls where these should have been. On the twenty-fourth day of March, 1916, there was an unusual stir about the place. Preparations were on foot for much more cooking than was required for the little company that lived there, and as the train rolled into the station a few furlongs away, a mixed company alighted and made their way toward the mission. There were some American missionaries, some native Christians, some children, and two or three English soldiers. What did it mean? It meant that this day had been appointed for the dedication and naming of the new missionary station.

An impressive service was held, in which it was felt that in this place, midst the darkness

of heathenism, God would truly bless souls with the light of the gospel. After the service each visitor, as well as those living on the place, handed in a slip of paper on which was written the name which he or she thought would be appropriate for the mission station. The name was to be a Hindustani one, so those who did not know that language had to give their choice in English and have it translated. This was the case with the name chosen by one of the soldiers. He said he thought it ought to be called "the place of faith," because everything accomplished there had been done by faith, and he believed it would continue to be so. That was the name which was finally decided upon, translated into the Hindustani word, "Imangah."

It was not long after this that faith was tested again and was found to be sufficient for the time of need. The hot weather was coming on, and it was necessary to dig a well. One attempt had been made on a cheap scale, but as the ground for many feet down is of loose sand, this well caved in. The kind of well that was needed would cost about five hundred rupees. But who was to supply the money? God knew all about that.

The contract was signed with a man experienced in such work. Half the money was to be paid when the work should be half finished, and the remaining half when the well should be completed. The digging began, and the bricks were made, and in a very short time the first payment would be due; but there was nothing in sight for this. A meeting was held for special prayer that this money might be received in time.

Shortly before this a letter had been received from an old soldier friend of the Mission who had gone to Mesopotamia to serve in the war. He wrote that he had been wounded in the knee and was not getting along as well as he should, so he asked that prayer be made for his healing. In due time another letter came saying that God had heard and answered prayer, that his knee was quite well, and he was back at his work. He added that he had given orders that a sum of money which he had left banked in India should be sent to the Mission as a thank offering. When the money came—just a day or two before the payment should be made on the well—it was found to be a little more than enough to cover that need. Then it was time

to have another prayer meeting—this time one of thanksgiving for the healing of the soldier's knee, as well as for the money for the well.

Soon another petition was carried to the throne of grace. It was for the doors and windows, which were still lacking. Prayer was made at Imangah, but a lady living about four hundred miles away was touched by the Lord, and she began to take up a collection for the purpose in the town where she lived. Some gave a rupee, some four annas, and some five rupees, and it was not long till she had seventy-five rupees in hand, which she sent that the missionaries might be protected from the cold winds of winter and the hot winds of summer.

One rather amusing incident happened in connection with this lady's collecting. She always took with her a snapshot of the walls of the house, with the men who had been working on it standing on the tops of the walls. As she was showing this picture, one person remarked, "What a beautiful building it will be!" We had to laugh to think a picture could be so deceiving as to make bare mud walls look beautiful. Nevertheless, it is a beautiful building to those who live in it, for they have given their

all to the Lord, and this is the home that God has given them while they are working for Him in this place. Sometimes when they go on the Lord's errands, they can hardly say that they have a place to lay their heads; and even when they go to places where there are far more comforts than they find here, it is always with thankfulness that they come back to Imangah.

During this first summer a yoke of oxen was bought, and one of the first things necessary was to bring forty loads of fertilizer from Allahabad. The result was that the land that had been so barren soon began to look very different. From year to year more fertilizer has been added, and the garden that flourishes where that scanty grain used to grow is a wonder to many. A young Pasi boy grew up with the garden and is now the mali (gardener). He is very proud of his massive cauliflowers and cabbages and brings in great basketsful of peas and other vegetables to be used in the kitchen.

And now the work began to grow. Other missionaries came from Allahabad. Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians came as they were called by God to work here, so we began to say, as the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "The

place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us." There was no doubt about it—more rooms, and in fact more buildings would have to be put up. But as the work had grown, faith had grown also, and the fresh task was undertaken with good courage. This time the money was provided, so that in no case did one beam at a time have to be bought. In the course of about two years the first house had grown from two rooms to ten, and two other long buildings stood a little distance away. One of these was for the orphan children, and the other one consisted of a print-shop, laundry, carpenter shop, and storerooms for cattle feed and for grain that was kept from year to year as a relief fund for the poor villagers who could not buy seed for their fields.

During the hot summers sometimes the missionaries used to get away to the hills for a short time. But this meant a great deal of extra expense, so one summer they made up their minds that no one should try to go that year, but that they would pray that God would give them especially good health. They planned to devote the money which would have been used in this way to direct missionary work. During this

summer they held a special meeting every day for prayer, aside from the regular prayer-time. And as they waited upon the Lord, they felt that it would please Him for them to ask great things. So they made a prayer list, which included some things that in those days seemed far-away and impossible. God certainly honored their faith, and many things have come to pass that would have remained impossible if they had not been brought to Him who can do all things. The prayer for good health was abundantly answered that summer. A good buffalo that should give enough milk to supply them all was one request, and it was not long before the money was in hand to purchase one that gave twenty quarts of milk a day. Thus we were not only supplied with all the milk we needed, but butter and cheese were made, and some of the butter was clarified for cooking purposes.

Some of the prayers of that summer were not answered till years afterward, but it all came to pass in God's good time. In those days a house of our own in the hills seemed the most remote possibility; in fact, some wondered whether it should be included in the list at all.

However, some money was offered for the purpose, and a search was made for a small house. None that we could find, however, seemed to be the right one, and evidently God saw that our faith was not quite big enough at that time; for when the house was finally obtained, it was many times larger than anything we had thought of then. It is, however, none too large, for our little company has grown to a considerable size.

A printing-press was another item that took years of prayer, but it is standing in the print-shop to-day, printing the India "Burning Bush," which carries the gospel message every month to all parts of India. Much other printing is also done, and as the years go on and the work grows, no doubt it will call for another and a larger press, so that books and tracts in Hindi and Urdu, as well as English, may be printed and sent out to give light to those who still walk in darkness.

Another thing we were praying for at that time was a tent in which to hold our meetings. We had a small tent that would accommodate one family for living purposes, but whoever else went out camping had to live in a hut made of rice straw. There was no harm in that, but the

great drawback was that the people who came to listen had to sit out in the cold. We used to get great logs of wood and build a fire, around which the meeting was held. A tent came in answer to prayer. It was too long, so it was cut in two, and part used for meetings and part for living quarters. That tent has worn out long ago, and God has since given us larger and better tents—all in answer to prayer.

Since that prayer list was made, many more things have been prayed for and received that had not even been thought of then. For instance—an automobile. It probably would have seemed absolutely wrong in those days to think of wanting a car, for cars were a luxury then.

Do you ask how we got to our meetings? We walked. Of course, we could not cover a great deal of ground on foot, but we often walked three miles and back again to hold a meeting. For other work also it seemed a real necessity to have some sort of conveyance. The car came in due time, and afterward a second one. Both are kept very busy, going to and from meetings, bringing supplies from the city, going on errands of mercy to the sick, and carrying sick people to the hospital.

As time went on, we found that in order to keep up with God's plan we should have to do something very definite for the sick people who came to us for help. A dispensary was opened, where a large number of patients were attended every morning with simple remedies. This department of the work grew until it was felt that the right thing to do was to build a hospital right on our own place, so that those who needed continued attendance could remain and be waited upon. Like the hill house, this also was talked of and planned and put off, until, in the end, it has been worked out on a much larger scale than was at first intended. So the Lord sometimes has to make us wait for our faith to grow large enough to take in His plan.

The hospital building is the most substantial one on the place. One day when it was almost finished, we heard a woman from one of the villages remark, as she looked it over, "*Is men to lakri ka nam bhi nahin liya gaya.*" (In this, not even the name of wood has been taken.) It is built of brick, and the beam and other supports are of iron.

Several villages that were closed to us as far as preaching was concerned have been opened

through the hospital work. One year our tents were pitched near a large village about twelve miles from Imangah. At first, large crowds came to hear, but the reformed Hindus were not pleased, so they began to threaten the people and made them stop their attendance at the meetings. There was nothing to do but to move away and trust the Lord to open up the way later. A short time after this a call came to attend a woman in that village who would certainly have died if she had not had immediate help. Her life was saved, and as she was the wife of one of the prominent Brahmans of the place, every one soon heard of it; and all the village folk are our friends to-day. They listen to us gladly whenever we go there to preach. A branch mission station has been built about two miles from this place, where the gospel is being preached, and the poor and the sick are being ministered to according to their needs.

It is in the neighborhood of this "place of faith"—Imangah, that most of the incidents related in the following chapters have taken place. It is to this spot that people come from many miles around with their troubles—whether it be a case of sickness or a letter to be written or

a lost relative to be found. One day a poor man came who had some days before received his last pay from the army where he had been working in the labor corps. His pay had come to him in the form of two ten-rupee notes. He had put them, as he thought, in a safe place, where thieves would not find them, but there was one kind of a thief he had not reckoned on. When he went to take out his money to use it, he found that rats had been there and had eaten such a large portion of the notes that he could not use them. He came to the mission crying like a child, hoping we might be able to help him even in this predicament. It took some time, but finally, through the intercession of one of the missionaries, two new notes were given him from the mint.

Our work at Imangah is as varied as it can possibly be, but with faith in a God who is at the helm, all things are possible. And no matter what phase of the work it may be, if done to the glory of God, there is joy in the doing of it.

The workers are as varied as the work. Englishmen, Americans, Hindus, Canadians, Bengalis, Portuguese, Scotch, Anglo-Indians, French,

Bhutanese—all work together, all eat at the same tables, and all are ready to do cheerfully the task allotted to them. It is faith that has brought them together, and it is by faith that each one will be able to fulfil the call of God. And so we press forward to that one common reward that God has prepared for all His faithful laborers, who at the setting of the sun will hear His loving invitation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."



Bathing in the Ganges

PILGRIMS

Thou madest me for Thyself, and my heart is restless until it repose in Thee. —St. Augustine

MILLIONS of them, restless, sin-sick, tired of living, but still living on—pilgrims, journeying wearily from one sacred spot to another, ever seeking peace, but finding none.

Benares is the Holy City of the Hindu. A pilgrim who drinks the holy water of the Ganges at Benares, if he pays the sleek priests well for the privilege, is curable of any disease to which the human family is heir. And should he fail

of a cure, his soul flies straight to regions of bliss—from Benares. So devoutly believes the orthodox Hindu. And so a great multitude of impotent folk come to holy Benares to be cured, or to die with their feet dipping in the sacred waters. Thus many suffering from cholera and typhoid wade out into the filthy, muddy waters into which the city sewerage is emptied. Others follow, bathing in and eagerly drinking the holy water and filling jars to carry to their homes all over India. Thus disease and death are spread throughout the land—and thus the teeming throngs of pilgrims hope to wash away their sins.

During the great winter mela or religious festival at Allahabad, thousands assemble from every part of India. The Hindu considers this the most propitious time for bathing at the junction of the two great rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna. Widows and men whose fathers have died must have their heads shaved near the river before they bathe. They are promised release from ten thousand rebirths for every hair that finds its way into the Ganges. Permanent residents of Allahabad are exempt from this head-shaving, because it is concluded that some

of their hairs must reach the holy river some time during the year, through the action of wind and water. The Hindu believes he must pass through eighty thousand rebirths before he finally bids farewell to this vale of tears, so exemption from ten thousand of them is no small consideration.

AMONG the pilgrims who came to bathe one year, there was an old Brahman widow from a village near Bombay. We first saw her early one morning as we were walking down a road not far from our house. She was lying under a nim tree by the roadside on a piece of ragged bedding, and her little bundle of earthly possessions formed her pillow. We tried to speak to her, but she was too ill to answer our inquiries. She was breathing with great difficulty, and there was a heavy fever flush that could not be hidden even by the dark brown color of her face. We knew she was a widow, because her head was shaved and she wore no ornaments on her arms and neck.

We spoke to a policeman standing near, who told us what he knew of her story. "She was traveling with the other people from her vil-

lage," he said, "until she became too weak to walk further. Then she sank down under the tree where you see her lying."

"But did none of her friends stop to help her?"

"Oh no, they were in a hurry, and could not take time to stop. Besides, what could they do for her?"

It was too evident that such had been the case—the woman had been left to die. Being a despised widow, she was of no consequence to those with whom she traveled. Then, too, they must have known that her relatives at home would willingly be rid of such a burden. Besides all this, they reasoned, the gods must have solemnly ordained this event. It must have been written on her forehead by the golden pen of Brahma that she should die here by the roadside.

We asked the policeman if some one of her caste would not take her into his house and care for her. He looked horrified and said that a Brahman could not possibly take a stranger into his house to die; if he did, the caste of his whole family would be broken.

How gladly would we have taken the dying

widow into our home and made her last hours as comfortable as possible! But if she had allowed us to do it, she would have broken her caste; and according to her belief such a fate would have been worse than to die alone by the roadside.

We had to pass that way several times a day, and each time it was with an aching heart that we looked at the sufferer lying under the nim tree. We knew that the lonely, dying widow possessed an immortal soul, and that there was no hope of her ever learning anything of the love and power of God.

Two days later as we passed that way, we missed the old woman and her pitiful little bundle of rags. She was gone. Inquiring of the policeman, we were told that the lifeless body had been taken away in the early hours of the morning to be burned beside the sacred river, in which she had hoped to wash away her sins. The religion which had forbidden gentle ministrations for the suffering widow while she lived had compelled her caste people to attend to the ceremonies appointed for the dead. She had come, hoping to find peace—but she had died in despair.

WORSE THAN DEATH

WE RECALL the sad story of another old Brahman woman who had come to Allahabad to bathe in the Ganges at the time of the mela. She had traveled from Bilaspur in the Central Provinces, a distance of about five hundred miles. She became so ill that she, too, was forsaken by her people. By her death in the sacred city, she would gain the favor of the gods; and incidentally, they would be relieved of so undesirable a burden. However, it chanced that the poor old creature did not die. As her health improved, she began to beg and thus obtained a little food by which she gained strength to walk about again.

She came to our house one day begging for food and told us her sad story. We gave her some uncooked rice, dal (split peas) and potatoes, which she took gladly, and no doubt she had such a feast as she had not enjoyed for a long time.

From a human viewpoint this poor woman's case was more tragic than that of the one who had died. Even if she should ever secure enough money to return to her old home, she would

not be likely to find a welcome there. A person who has been deserted and thus left to the mercy of the gods and has escaped from them is considered in much the same light as an outcaste and can never resume the place formerly held in the family.

If the poor old widow had fallen ill in her own home, her people would have been compelled to care for her after a fashion. But since she had been left in a sacred spot to die, their duty was done, even though she lived on. Poor creature! We tried to show her the folly of such a religion as hers, but she was too old to change, she said. The only hope we could offer for this world or the one to come was in the acceptance of the love of Jesus. This she seemed unable to grasp, so she was utterly without hope. The best prospect she could look forward to in this world was the life of a lonely beggar. She must wander about from place to place in search of people kind-hearted enough to give her food. Then she must gather a few sticks and build a fire under some tree where she could cook her lonely meal. And when she became too weak to do this, she must lie down somewhere to die—alone.

Could we bear to think of our widowed mothers ending their days in this comfortless, loveless way? It is not because Hindus are naturally so hard-hearted and cruel that they follow these terrible customs, but because their religion for generations has taught them that this is the duty of man.

The government has made laws preventing many cruel practises that have been carried on in the past in the name of religion, but the government cannot change the hearts of the people and drive from their minds the teachings of ages past. This power rests with Him alone who came into the world to save sinners—the divine Savior of men. He has taught us the terrible wrong of these cruel practises and has sent us to bring to these dark-skinned brothers and sisters the gospel of peace and love and purity. My friend, shall we betray our sacred trust?

A BLOOD-WASHED PILGRIM

THE story of our third pilgrim is happily very different from those of the other two. We found this "diamond in the rough" one afternoon after we had been having a rather dis-

couraging time. We had been out as usual visiting among the women, trying to sow a little seed here and there. But the ladies who were usually so ready to listen to us were all so busy that day that we could not persuade them to leave their work. At last we called at a Mohammedan home which we had visited a few times before, and for the first time we found the man of the house at home. He met us with a frown and informed us that we were not wanted there; that he did not want his wife to learn anything about our religion. We saw it was useless to insist, so decided to wait a few days and then return, hoping we should find him in a better mood the next time we called. So we retraced our steps through the narrow gali (alley), and went on our way, wondering where we should go next to scatter a little gospel seed.

We turned our steps into an entirely new neighborhood, but we thought perhaps we had made another mistake, for the place seemed forsaken. There were the houses, the cows, and the buffaloes—but no people. The reason was that they were all gardeners and were busy attending to their artichokes and kakris (a cucumber-like vegetable), in season at that time.

As we passed along, we saw some one lying on a ledge of earth which had been built along the front of one of the houses. A head was feebly raised, and a poor old woman greeted us. We stopped and talked with her and found her a poor ignorant soul, but so hungry that she seemed ready to drink in everything we said to her. She was not a Brahman as the other two pilgrims were, nor was she away from home; and yet she was a pilgrim in the most solemn sense, almost ready to step over the dark river. Thank God, the way was made light for her before she went.

The poor woman was evidently suffering from asthma, for she breathed heavily and was very weak. That was the only reason we found her at home that day, for had she been able to work, she would have been out in the garden with the other women.

Before we left her, she promised she would pray to God, in the name of Jesus, that her sins might be forgiven and the sorrow taken from her heart. By this time it was growing late, so we went home, feeling that despite the discouraging beginning, our afternoon's work had not been in vain. If we had met with

success in the Mohammedan's neighborhood, we should not have come to this one, so we thanked God for the difficulties.

After a few days we went again to see our aged friend and this time found her sister also at home. Both women were very friendly, but the sister did not seem particularly interested in what we had to say. One thing rejoiced our hearts—none of the sick woman's people made any objection to our coming, nor to her praying in the name of Jesus. This time she told us she believed God had heard her prayer and that His peace had come into her heart.

The rest of the family were very friendly, but would have nothing to do with the gospel message we brought. One of the young men tried to show his friendliness one day by presenting us each with a kakri. He said, "*Tum log kakri khaoge?*" (Will you people eat cucumbers?) It was not an elegant gift, nor did he use the polite form of speech, but we appreciated the simple kindness of his heart and accepted his little offering with thanks.

We visited our old friend several times and each time were increasingly surprised at her spiritual understanding. The memory of it has

been an encouragement to us ever since, for it showed us how God can enlighten the darkest minds, if they only turn toward Him.

One morning when we called to see our friend, her sister met us with the tidings that she had passed away and that she had seemed very happy to go. We felt a great thankfulness that she was through with her life of trouble, for we knew that Jesus had welcomed her into the house of many mansions, and that she was rejoicing with the redeemed around the throne of God.

As we look into the faces of these weary-hearted pilgrims, who have been seeking peace all their lives, it is the yearning prayer of our hearts that we may be able to help a few of them to lift their weary eyes from their present misery to a bright hope of future happiness and everlasting rest. Only the love of Jesus daily set before their starving souls can accomplish this purpose. The faithful work, the loving sacrifice, and the fervent prayers of His humble followers will work wonders in pointing out to these darkened pilgrims the shining path that leads to glory.



The Shoemaker

"THE THIEF COMETH"

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. —Jesus Christ

IN AGES past—so we are told—when the fair-faced forefathers of the Hindus came to India, they found a dark, heavy-featured race who were builders of great temples. The priests of the newcomers decreed that they should not mix with the swarthy race, but remain forever separate. For this reason the dark native race were declared unclean or "untouchable."

And so gradually India fell into the clutches of the iron monster, Caste. First there were the lawmakers, the "earthly gods," known as Brahmans. Next beneath them were the fighting men; lower, the cultivators; and very low indeed, a caste created to be the servants of the other three. And last and lowest of all, forever disgraced and forever hated and shunned by their fellow men, were those who had no caste at all —"untouchables."

Out of these have evolved the countless castes of modern India—the cobblers, a brutal, drunken class of people; the tanners, repulsed because they handle the skins of dead animals; the fortune tellers, a wandering tribe much like our gypsies; and thus, to weary and interminable lengths does the social scale run on. And no matter how degraded may be his lot, the most terrible thing that can befall any Hindu is to break his caste. Here is a bondage, a horrible slavery of the evil one, that the power of our Christ alone can ever break.

"Untouchables" cannot procure their drinking water from the public wells. Their children cannot attend the public school. There is no court of justice to right their wrongs.

Some are not even allowed the privilege of working—they can merely beg. And in doing this they cannot defile the public highway; they must stand afar off, and there, heard but not seen, cry out their need to passers-by. The alms must be tossed to the beggar from this distance—and it must not fall upon the road. When the benefactor has gone, the beggar may run out and furtively snatch the precious gift.

Needless to say, caste is the great enemy of the missionary; it is the most effective tool in the hand of the thief who comes to destroy India's benighted millions. It holds in its ruthless grasp the souls for whom many consecrated missionaries have gladly laid down their lives. More than once have our hearts been wrung with agony to see this thief snatching away his victims—sometimes babes as helpless and innocent as the one you hold in your arms. Again, the victim has been a distressed and sinful soul, about to stand at the Judgment Bar—longing for freedom to make peace with God, but held fast by the impassable barriers of a heathen religion. It is such cases as these that we are about to cite —victims who have crossed our own humble pathway as we have labored to fulfil our mission.

THERE was a man by the name of Bhinda, with whom we had some acquaintance, as he had attended our services. The time came when he wished to marry, but since he had neglected to do so until he was too old according to Hindu custom, no orthodox Hindu would give him his daughter to wed.

Finally Bhinda found a woman who had become dissatisfied with her husband and had left him, so she became his wife. She had a little son about two years old at the time of this marriage. After a year or so, a new baby came to the home, and although Bhinda had not been happy in his married life, he was immensely pleased with his little son.

Before long, however, he came to us with a very sad face. He said his wife was not only very neglectful of her household duties, but extremely cruel in her treatment of the little baby. The nourishment that rightfully belonged to the little one was given to the older child, who was now three years of age, and all day long the neglected baby lay out on a pile of straw near the house.

At first we could hardly believe a woman would treat her own child in such a heartless

manner, but we went one day to investigate and found it was too true. There on the bare straw lay the little baby, covered with a dirty rag. He was wailing faintly, and when we uncovered him, we found that his tiny arms and legs looked more like little sticks than human limbs. There was an old, pinched look on the little face.

We tried to remonstrate with the woman, but she only looked at us brazenly, as if to say, "It is my affair, not yours." She was holding the older child in her arms, but refused to do anything for the baby. We secured a bottle, and several times we filled it with milk for the little one, but finally the mother would not even allow us to do that. Then we tried to persuade Bhinda to allow us to take the baby home with us, that we might care for it; and he was quite willing to do so.

But here the caste demon stepped in and interfered. Bhinda was a Kunbi—farmer caste; and when his fellows heard that he was giving his baby to us, they called a meeting at once and informed him that if he dared to do such a thing, he would straightway be put out of the caste. Bhinda had not the strength of char-

acter to stand against this terrible threat. So the poor little child was robbed of the comforts we longed to give, and in the end, of life itself, for not many days afterward, Bhinda came to us with the sorrowful message that the baby was dead.

OTHER CHILD VICTIMS

ONE day three children suddenly appeared at our house. Their little pinched faces were most pitiful to see. The oldest girl was perhaps ten, the next four or five, and one of them held in her arms a baby about three months old. The girls said they had no parents and no one to care for them, so we gladly took them into our home. Our Hindustani girls found great delight in making over some old clothes for the children to wear until something better could be obtained, and in giving them the food which they so sorely needed.

The girls named the baby Shanti, which means peace, and the little one improved very rapidly. We thought fondly that she would prove a great joy and comfort to us all.

But not many days had passed, when a man

appeared who said he was the children's father. Evidently he had been away from home when they came to us. He said he himself would be very glad to let us keep the children and bring them up, but his caste brethren were insisting that he should take away the two older girls at least. The oldest child was already married, and of course, her Hindu mother-in-law would not think of allowing her to remain in a Christian home. No doubt the little girl's husband was too young to make any objection on his own account.

"Besides," said the man, "these two girls are not mine. Their mother was married to another man, who went away, and we do not know whether he is living or not, so I have no right to give the girls to you. But the baby is my own, and you may have her, for I am not able to support her." So the older children had to leave us, but our girls still loved and cared for little Shanti.

After a few days, however, the father returned and said his caste brethren were giving him so much trouble that he would have to take the baby. He was only a Chamar—a shoemaker—his caste was very low indeed. But it meant

too great a sacrifice for the father to give up his caste for the sake of the baby. So little Shanti was taken away from us. The girls wept over the loss of their little charge, but there was nothing to do but submit to the heartless demands of caste.

Our girls sometimes went to the village to see the children to whom they had become so attached. One day when they returned from one of these visits, they brought the tidings that little Shanti was dead. Her father had not been able to provide milk for her, and the women who looked after her had not cared whether she lived or died; so she had been cruelly neglected, and death came as a welcome release to the little sufferer. Hinduism had decreed that it was better for a little child to starve to death than to be fed by Christians. The thief had claimed one more of his millions of victims.

GRANDMOTHER'S MISTAKE

SOME years ago a well-to-do lady in Allahabad told us of a family of children who had been left motherless and fatherless. She said, "They are the children of an old servant

of mine. If you will take them and bring them up, I will help to supply the money for their support."

The children were living with their grandmother, who was a servant herself and had very little time to devote to their care. We called to see her one day and told her we were willing to relieve her of the care of the children and to take the responsibility of their education. She seemed perfectly astonished that we should make such a suggestion.

"What," she cried, "shall I allow my grandchildren to break their caste and become Christians? Never! I will keep them and have them married into Hindu families." There was no use in trying to reason with her, for she was staunch and stubborn in her resolve.

We have never seen those children since that day nor heard anything about them. We do not know whether fortune has smiled or frowned upon them, in a worldly sense. But we do know that they have been robbed of a Christian training and a saving knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If we had succeeded in getting the children, perhaps the grandmother, who was a widow,

might have found the light and been made to rejoice in the Lord in the closing days of her life. But her zeal for her false religion barred her out, for she clung to her belief as tenaciously as most elderly people do, in India as well as in more enlightened lands. "Oh," they say, "I am too old now to change my religion," and so the robber continues his deadly work.

HER DYING REQUEST

WE FIRST saw Surju's wife when we came to this district in 1914. She was rough and boisterous, as were also her daughters, who attended the Sunday School regularly. She herself often attended the meetings, especially those held in Badalpur where she lived. She never seemed very serious, however, and we sometimes feared that her influence over the other women was not good. She often came to work at our place when special help was wanted. During the influenza siege she worked for us three days to earn a blanket.

Her eldest daughter was a very wild girl, but at one time we had hopes of her conversion. Almost every day she used to come and listen to

our little Christian girls, as they talked to her about Jesus. One day she burst into tears and promised that she would pray for her own salvation. Conviction seemed to wear off, however, and she was soon observed to be as wild and careless as ever. We were afraid that this was due, to a great extent, to her mother's influence.

The time came when Surju's wife lay on her deathbed. The last night of her life she begged Surju to send for some of the missionaries; she wanted to see us before her soul passed out into eternity. But Surju, being a strict Hindu, became angry, and instead of sending for us began to abuse his wife for making such a request. Before morning the soul of this wicked woman had passed out to meet its God.

Surju, in times past, had been employed in preparing feed for our cattle, and when he had been dismissed, the feed bill had decreased by almost one-half. We suspected that his wife had helped to steal the feed and thought it might be this that was burdening her heart when she called for us in her dying hour. Whether or not this was the case, we shall never know. But we do know this—that one more soul had slipped

out into the dark beyond, and that there was no star of hope to brighten the way. Truly, "the thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy."



A Village Meeting

A VILLAGE MEETING

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.

—Isaiah

AS WE passed on our way from time to time visiting among the villages, we had often seen a cluster of houses in the distance, but we thought Kanjiyani such a small place that we never held a meeting there. It was the home of Ram Adin, and when he came to work for us, we became interested in his vil-

lage. There are so many little hamlets round about us that it seems impossible to visit them all. We realized more vividly than ever how great is the harvest and how very few are the laborers, when we considered that this village, just a little more than a mile from our house, had never been visited previous to this time.

We have no doubt but there are enough of villages round about our home, within a radius of three miles, that five preaching parties could go out every night, and yet each village would not be reached oftener than once in two weeks.

We decided to hold a meeting in the little village of Kanjiyani, but we did not know the way to get there; so how were we to find it in the dark? We knew, however, that we had to pass through Lusanpur, so decided to call out to Dasu, who lives there, and ask him to show us the way to Ram Adin's village. This we did, and he seemed very glad to be our guide.

As we entered the village, there was the usual greeting from the pariah dogs that seem to spring up from every corner. The children went scampering in every direction, announcing our arrival, and the women cast shy glances from under their saris as we passed by.

Dasu led us into the village to a little courtyard near Ram Adin's house, where we found quite a number of people sitting about. Ram Adin salaamed us and seemed glad to see us in his village. It was an ideal place for a meeting, for evidently some building had been going on, and there was a great heap of earth in the middle of the court around which the houses were built. On this mound the people arranged themselves in tiers as in a gallery, while some hastened to place beds on the roomiest side of the court to serve as chairs for us.

We began by singing a bhajan (Hindustani song), the meaning of which was explained by one of the lady missionaries. Then another bhajan was sung, and some joyful testimonies were given to the power of our God to save from sin. We had noticed four or five young men a little better dressed than the others standing in a group. They seemed very much interested, and one of them called out and asked if we would sing the bhajan, "*Yisu Masih Mera Pran Bachaiya*" (Jesus Christ, the Savior of My Soul). We wondered where he had heard it, but asked no questions. We sang the bhajan, and the young men seemed much pleased.

After prayer the preacher dwelt upon the necessity of preparation to leave this world. Translated into English, the sermon would run about as follows:

"If any man among you is going to do any kind of work, he first makes preparation for it. Why? Because he has common sense. What would you think of a man who wanted to raise a crop of grain, but did not first prepare his ground? Suppose you saw him go out and sow his grain on the hard, dry ground—what would you say? 'That man is foolish—he knows nothing about farming.' When you want to raise a good crop, you bring out your plow and your oxen and plow the ground; not once or twice, but three or four times—and then you harrow it. After that you sow your seed. You water the ground when it becomes too dry; and by and by you harvest a good crop.

"What would you think of a man who wanted to build a house, but made no preparation? Suppose you saw him trying to heap up dry dirt for his walls, without even mixing it with water. You would ask, 'Where are your bamboos, and where is your tiling for the roof?' and he would say, 'Oh, I have none—but I intend to build a house.' You would go away and tell your neighbors, and everybody would laugh at him. And by and by when the rains came, that man's mud walls would run away like water, and he would not have anything left that even looked like a house.

"When you wish to build a house, you dig down into the ground and build a foundation. Then you mix your mud until it is nice and smooth. You put on a layer at a time and let it dry in the sunshine until it becomes hard and firm. You tell the potter to make you so many thousand tiles, and you go to the man who has bamboos and timbers to sell, or you cut branches from your own trees the right lengths for your roof. And when your house is finished, your neighbors do not laugh at you, neither do the rains wash it away. Why do you do all this? Because you are men of sense and know how a house should be built.

"What would you say about a man who wants to go on a long journey, but makes no preparation? Suppose he wishes to go to Badrinath (the temple at the source of the Ganges), where it is very cold, and he does not take any warm clothes with him. He goes to the railway station, but he does not buy a ticket, for he has no money with him. Will he be allowed to ride on the train? No, the station master will give him a very hard scolding and may even beat and kick him and throw him off the platform."

At this there are vigorous nods and broad grins among the crowd, for they know how true it is that men in authority will abuse them on every possible pretext.

"But when you go on a journey or a pilgrimage,"

continues the preacher, "you prepare for it; you use common sense.

"There was once a rich man who had a faithful servant, and whenever he went on a journey, the servant went with him and kept his clothes in order and attended to his every wish.

"The years flew past, and the rich man became old. Illness overtook him, and one day he called his servant to his bedside. He told him he was going away on a long journey, but that he must go alone.

" 'But when will you return?' asked the servant anxiously.

" 'I shall never return. I am leaving this world and shall never come back to it again.'

" 'But how will you fare on such a journey, since no preparation has been made? Always before I have packed your clothes and made everything ready for you. I feel sad to see you set out alone and without any preparation for this long journey from which you can never return.'

"Oh brothers, are you not like that man? When you wish to do any kind of work, you show yourselves to be men of sense; you make preparation. But you must all take that long journey, just as this man did—and have you made any preparation?

"Some of you have become bhagats (devotees) and wear strings of beads around your necks. But that cannot do you any good, for you must have your sins forgiven and stop sinning, if you want to be ready for that long journey.

"Some of you go to the Ganges and bathe, but that

cannot wash away your sins. Neither is there any man to whom you can go, who can take your sins away. Your gurus (teachers) cannot do it, for they, too, are sinful men. It will do you no good to go to the Brahmans, for although they are high caste and you look up to them, they are men like yourselves and cannot save any man from sin.

"Who then can save you? There is only One, and that is God. He longs to save you. It grieves Him to see you living on in sin. He can forgive all your sins and make your hearts clean, so that you will not want to steal and tell lies and say bad words to your neighbors. He can take away your heavy load of sin and make you light-hearted and happy.

"You do not need to go on a long pilgrimage to find God. If you will go into your little house all alone, and ask Him, He will come and help you; or you can go out into the field, or under your mango tree, and talk to God there, and He will hear you and give you rest in your heart. Do not bow down before an image, for it is only a stone. What can it do? It cannot hear you speak. It cannot save you. Go to God and ask Him in the name of Jesus to save you, and He will never turn you away. He does not care whether you are a farmer or a hog raiser, a milkman or a Brahman. He will save every one of you, if you go to Him and ask Him to do it.

"But you must not delay, for you do not know when you must leave this world. Some go while they are still little children, some when they are young men, and some in their old age. How can you say when you will go? You must be wise and make your preparation now.

"When we started for your village this evening, we did not know the way, and if we had tried to find it alone, we might have been wandering around the fields even now. But we used our common sense and called to one of our friends who knew the way, asking him to come with us and guide us. Now you do not know the way to heaven. You are wandering about in the dark, and you do not know which way to go. You, too, must be sensible and ask Jesus to show you the way to heaven. And He will do it, for He loves every one of you. Your gods have very ugly, angry faces, but the true God is not like that. He is anxious to receive you and give you rest and peace in your heart."

All this time the people sat and listened. Sometimes a puzzled expression came over their faces, and the preacher saw they did not quite understand, so would repeat and try to make it a little more plain and simple. Then they would brighten up and nod their heads, showing that they had caught the meaning. All through the sermon they kept nodding assent, and sometimes made remarks to each other about the things that were said.

After the sermon one of the young men exhorted for a short time, and to this also the people listened attentively. After singing another short bhajan, which was really the words of John

3: 16 translated into Hindustani and set to music, we closed the meeting, and the people gathered round to invite us to come again.

At this, the young man who had asked us to sing a certain bhajan in the first part of the meeting came forward and told us that he and his four brothers had been away in the Fiji Islands working and had heard some of these Christian bhajans there. He showed an Indian characteristic when he called out in English as we were leaving, "Write my name down; it is Sher Shankar." If an Indian knows a few words of English, he will make a show of his knowledge on every possible occasion. He promised to come and see us at our house. May his heart be touched by the power of God.

Our little village meetings are very simple, and some one looking on might say, "They amount to nothing," but with the prayers of God's children behind them, something must be accomplished. And if you cannot come and preach to these people, you can go into your closet, and having shut your door, you can pour out your heart to God in earnest prayer that these poor ignorant villagers may understand and receive the message of salvation.



A Mohammedan Praying

ETIQUETTE IN HINDUSTAN

O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as ithers see us.
—Burns

VASTLY different from ours, and strange and often laughable as it may seem to us, the etiquette of the Hindu is a vital matter to him. Among the lower classes with whom most of our work has to do, caste rules, in the

main, mark the boundary line of etiquette. But the more well-to-do carry out their ideas of etiquette to a nicety.

Europeans, being uninitiated at first, often bring upon themselves the displeasure of the Hindu. We once knew a gentleman who desired to rent a house belonging to a well-to-do Hindu. Unwittingly, he addressed that owner with that form of the pronoun commonly used in addressing servants and inferiors, and as a result he failed to obtain the house.

A salutation suitable to use in addressing people of any class is the salaam, which consists in saying the word and raising the right hand to the forehead. The left hand must never be used—that would be considered a great insult.

Family etiquette is peculiarly strict. We once made a dreadful blunder by asking a woman her husband's name. For the moment we forgot that she could not tell us; it is considered a shame for a woman to speak her husband's name, or a man his wife's. If a woman's name is Panchu, her husband cannot even say the word "panch," meaning "five." If he is counting, he must leave that number out.

Suppose the mother of Kalu wishes to call her husband. She may do so in this way: "Oh, father of Kalu!" And her husband likewise may call her thus: "Oh, mother of Kalu!"

A Hindustani family almost never takes a meal together. The man of the house must have his food first, then the sons, after them the wife, and last of all the daughters. If there are no sons, it is considered a mark of love if the husband leaves a little of the food on his dish for his wife.

Only the more educated and well-to-do have chairs, but beds are used very extensively as seats, and we often wonder how their frail legs hold up so many occupants. It is an act of great disrespect to others who are seated for one to sit next to the head of the bed unless bidden to do so; and when bidden, he should object.

One of our missionaries was talking with an elderly Mohammedan, and the only available seat was a rope bed. The missionary seated himself at the foot of the bed, but the Mohammedan would not sit down until he had moved over to the place of honor.

A Hindu should always remove his shoes upon entering a room. It would be as serious a

breach of etiquette to keep them on as for an Englishman to keep on his hat in the house. Then, too, the feet must be kept in a circumspect position, for should one's friends be able to see the bottoms of his feet or the soles of his shoes, it would be considered an insult.

When one is greeting a Hindustani person, he must never remark on how well he is looking or compliment him on any good fortune. No matter how well a Hindu may appear, it is polite to say that he is looking very ill. A missionary, who was watching two men at their fishing, congratulated them on their good catch. They answered him not a word, but gathering up their nets they went away grumbling, asking one another why the sahib should be jealous of them. The Hindu is sure to suspect jealousy if any one asks after the welfare of his wife or children.

Among nominal Christians too often religion must bow to etiquette. For instance, if a friend calls just before church time, there are very few who will not stay home to entertain him. Not so with a Hindu or a Mohammedan. If you visit a strict Mohammedan's shop at prayer-time, he will not so much as look at you.

He will go on with his prayers and let you stand and wait, or move on—as you please.

Numbers of times in our zenana work we have met women who, at prayer-time, have asked us to excuse them while they went and said their prayers. One day when we were calling on an old lady, she retired to say her evening prayers, and just then the water carrier clamored for admittance. It was necesssary for him to bring the water, and yet he must not see her, for she was a high-class woman. How could she hide herself and say her prayers at the same time? She covered herself from head to foot with a sheet and then allowed him to come in, while her prayers went on unhindered. Perhaps if Christians were as faithful in praying heartfelt petitions for the salvation of these people as these heathen are in saying their meaningless prayers, many more of them would find the true light and walk in it. May God help us!

We have never heard whether or not it is really polite, but, judging by what we have seen, it does not in the least interfere with Indian decorum to dispose of lice at any time or place. One of the first Hindustani teachers we ever had was a high-class Brahman, who seemed to

have considerable difficulty of this sort. His religion decreed that he could not kill a louse, for a Brahman must never take life in any form. So if the lice troubled him too much during the classes, he would pick them off and drop them on our floor. We were supposed to be so busy reciting our lessons that we did not notice, but very often a quiet smile passed around the class.

If the minor inhabitants of a man's shirt give him too much trouble as he is walking down the road, he takes off the shirt, sits down by the roadside and picks out some of them, then puts on his shirt again and proceeds on his way.

We do not mean to say that there are not many, many people who are too cleanly to allow vermin to remain on their bodies. However, Indians do not consider it nearly so disgraceful to be in this plight as English people or Americans do.

A young Mohammedan woman wished us to read the Bible to her. She could read a little Urdu herself, and she asked us to sit beside her on the bed so that she could see the book. She evidently wished to improve the time, for she brought a comb and mirror and began combing her hair. Whenever she found a louse, she would

crush it on the back of the mirror. We felt "creepy" for some time after the visit. Fortunately, however, none of the insects had migrated to us.

The women engage in this occupation of louse-catching at any time or place according to their convenience—at home, in the field, by the roadside, or in their little shops when they are not busy attending to customers. Europeans laughingly call this process the "Madras hunt."

One thing forbidden by the etiquette of the white race is inquisitiveness, but this does not appear to be the case with the Hindu. Of all the characteristics of the Indian, curiosity is undoubtedly one of the most prominent. We see it manifested every day around our village home. Sometimes a group of from six to ten men are looking all around the fields, peering into the cowshed and the cook house, down the well, and even into the doors and windows of our own dwelling. When we ask them if they want anything, they say, "*Nahin, sahib, ham sirf dekhte hain.*" (No, sir, we are only looking.)

An old lady from Badalpur, the village nearest us, could not walk steadily on account of her age, and yet she used to come at least once in

two weeks to see what progress we had made in our building and our work in the fields. When she had seen everything, she would come to us with a look of intense satisfaction on her face, with the words, "*Khub dekh liya hai.*" (I have had a good look.) She has since passed away, and we miss the bent figure that used to hobble about the premises.

Often when we have been calling on the women in their homes, they have asked us to take down our hair that they might see how long it was. Of course, we have never complied with this request. They have asked us, too, how old our dresses were, how much they cost, and how often we have washed them.

We were once very closely inspected, with open-eyed and open-mouthed wonder, when we went into a village not half a mile from our house. We thought it quite excusable, however, when we learned that the old lady under discussion had never seen a white person before. She breathed a sigh of satisfaction as she said, "After all these years, I have seen a white face for the first time."

We have also found in these people something akin to and yet of a higher order than curi-

osity; that is, a desire to know. When we visit the villages and talk to the women, they sit at our feet and listen as long as we will stay; and then they beg us to come back and tell them more.

Men who come to our meetings and listen with attention will not be satisfied if they do not understand the meaning of the testimonies and the preaching, and even of the songs. We earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit will work upon this keen desire to know things and awaken in the hearts of these people a longing to know for themselves the true and living God. This would not be too great a miracle for our mighty God to perform. He who has changed the whole course of our lives can do the same for these poor, ignorant people. "It shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."



A "Bhagat"—a Devotee

A PRODUCT OF HINDUISM

I am a part of all that I have seen. —Tennyson

RAM LAL is a man of some consequence living in a small village very near our home. When we first settled here, he seemed to be greatly interested in our type of religion and wished to have everything that he heard explained to him very thoroughly. Yet he always tried to find something in his own religion that

was just as good as the gospel message that we brought. The human heart is the same, the world over.

Ram Lal always called to us and wished us to come near his house to hold our meeting, so that he could hear. He considered himself a little better than his neighbors and would never go and sit near their houses to hear the singing and preaching.

Several times Ram Lal invited us to his home for a rare treat—a drink of sugar-cane juice. Now this juice is no great delicacy to us, but we always accept it when it is offered, because our native friends would feel hurt if we should refuse.

Once Ram Lal invited us to come to his house on a certain afternoon, promising a great feast. He could not eat with us, it was true—that would break his caste; but he could prepare the food and even wait on the table. He was not satisfied to have one or two of us there—we must all come, men, women, and children.

All the guests appeared at the time appointed. Ram Lal did not own such a thing as a chair, but we were duly seated on rope beds. The natives, of course, squat on the ground

when they eat their meals or visit with their friends, but they will not hear of our doing so.

Ram Lal himself brought for each of us a large green leaf which had been pinned with thorns in such a way as to make it shaped like a cup. These dainty cups were filled with ripe peas which had been cooked until they were quite tender and flavored with curry spices. Next he brought chapaties with curried potatoes and pickles made of green mangoes. The pickles, as well as the curried potatoes, were very hot with chilies, but having accustomed ourselves to this spicy diet, we were able to eat without any show of emotion. Last of all came a large earthen jar filled with sugar-cane juice, and the host announced that we must empty the jar. Whether or not we succeeded in this, I cannot tell, but we did our best.

After we had eaten, we took our Hindustani song books and proceeded to hold a meeting. Quite a crowd had gathered to watch us during the interesting performance of eating, and we could not fail to take advantage of this, and if possible sow a little gospel seed. As we sang bhajan after bhajan, Ram Lal was not satisfied until each was explained to him in detail. He

asked us to repeat the story of the person who went into another man's field to steal grain, for he had heard it in a previous meeting, and it had arrested his attention. As the story was told to him, he repeated it bit by bit to the other men, anxious that they should understand also. Perchance there were those whom he suspected of having stolen grain from his many fields.

At the close of the meeting Ram Lal brought out two Hindu religious books printed in very large type. He tried to tell us there were just as good things written in his books as in our Bible, but he could not tell us what the good things were.

Ram Lal cannot read very fluently, but he often has a guru (teacher) come and read these sacred books to himself and his neighbors. Night after night at certain seasons of the year we hear the drums and rude musical instruments playing an accompaniment to the singing of Hindu songs, after which the guru reads from the books. We are told that Ram Lal himself often makes an attempt to read them to his ignorant neighbors, but, not being able to figure out all the words, he substitutes some of his own. In this way he puts his own interpretation on the

contents of the books, and those who do not read for themselves believe it all.

Truly Ram Lal is a zealous follower of the Hindu faith. And now let us see what are the practical outworkings in his daily life. First we shall tell about his aunt, a poor helpless creature who had no one left of her own family. So she was entirely dependent on Ram Lal, and her lot was a hard one indeed. Very often she came to our house begging for a few potatoes, peanuts, vegetables, grain, or anything we had on hand, for she said Ram Lal did not give her enough to eat. The neighbors told us that he often beat the poor old woman most unmercifully.

A few years ago Ram Lal's uncle, Ram Nath, died. He was called a mahajan, because he was the richest man in his small village, and used to lend money to the poorer people at exorbitant rates of interest. Just before his death he had made brick with which he had intended to build a house for himself. All the other houses in the neighborhood were made of mud. As this man had no nearer relatives living, Ram Lal took over his property and affairs when he died.

Ram Nath was quite an elderly man, but he left two widows who were both strong, stalwart women. The first one had no sons, so he had taken a second, who became the mother of two children, a girl and a boy. The little boy often came to our Sunday School and was a source of some amusement, for he usually wore a monstrous pagri (headcloth) and not a stitch of clothing on his little brown body.

Within a year from Ram Nath's death both widows died. Some of the neighbors were suspicious and expressed themselves in the Hindustani idiom, "*Kuchh dal men kala hai.*" (There is something black in the dal.) It was indeed a strange coincidence that two healthy women should die in so short a time; particularly since their being out of the way gave Ram Lal full control of Ram Nath's property and children. There seemed to be no real proof, however, and no one took the trouble to investigate. Some one tried to get the children away because they were mistreated, but without success. So Ram Lal continues to make slaves of the children and uses for his own pleasure and comfort the money that rightfully belongs to them.

Ram Lal is now in a position to lend money

to his poor neighbors, and he is hard and cruel to a degree. There is a poor man by the same name, and to distinguish between the two, the poor man is called "Small Ram Lal." One day we mentioned the rich man as "Big Ram Lal" to a villager, and he said in a tone of disgust, "*Bara Ram Lal nahin, bara zabardast.*" (Do not say, Big Ram Lal, but big tyrant.)

That is what the neighbors think of Ram Lal. But he is a good Hindu, yes, a very, very good Hindu. Several years ago he went on a pilgrimage to Puri and worshiped at the shrine of Jagannath. Later he made a feast for his Hindu brotherhood, inviting as many old pilgrims as he could find in the neighborhood. The feast cost him about six hundred rupees, for he had fed several hundred people and held special pujas (worship) for about two weeks beforehand.

Ram Lal never asks us to hold a meeting for him now, nor invites us to feasts; although if we happen to have any business dealings with him, he is very polite. He has salved his hardened conscience by becoming a bhagat (devotee) and wears a string of yellow beads to let every one see that he is a "holy man."

Here we leave Ram Lal, with his fields of grain, his ill-gotten rupees, his yellow beads, and his holy books. He is what his gods and his priests have made him. He is a finished product of Hinduism. May his portrait, dear reader, stir us up to proclaim more fervently than ever the pure, sin-curing, soul-saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us put it into working force in our daily lives, for only thus may "the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Thank God, the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation—even the salvation of a life-long product of Hinduism.



Mother and Child

CASTING OUT DEVILS

"From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain."

A LITTLE child about three years old fell sick, and at once the parents said to one another, "*Bhut lag gaya.*" (A spirit has become attached to it.) The bhagat—the holy man who is supposed to have power to

drive out evil spirits—was called in to see the child. He muttered his incantations and performed his ceremonies. However, these did not have the desired effect, so the bhagat said the evil spirit would have to be burned out. He took a red-hot iron and burned the top of the poor little child's head. It is a great wonder that the little one's brain was not affected for life, as we doubt not it is in some cases. This horrible scene was the first of its kind that we saw enacted, and it left an impression not soon to be forgotten.

In cases of fever the evil spirit is supposed to have taken up its possession in the head. If the trouble is in the stomach, that is where the spirit dwells; and we have seen numbers of children with great scars on their stomachs where they have been burned in an attempt to cast out the evil spirit.

Much of the sickness among the villagers is due to carelessness and more to ignorance. A distressed mother came to us bringing a little child about two years old who was eating a large cucumber. She complained that the little one had had stomach trouble for a week or more, and wanted medicine for him. We pointed to

the cucumber and said, "How can you expect the child's stomach to be well, if you allow him to eat such things as that?" She looked very much surprised and said, "Oh, he cries for it; what can I do?"

We told her that instead of giving medicines, we prayed to God to make people well; but that there was no use in praying for the child unless she would promise to feed him properly. She went away much disappointed.

The process of casting out evil spirits is called phunkna. One morning we saw a woman sitting under a tree near our house, and Bhola the bhagat—one of our farm hands—squatting in front of her. We went closer to see what was going on and found that Bhola was performing phunkna—mumbling incantations and rubbing the child's stomach with an old knife. The baby's stomach was badly swollen with indigestion. When Bhola saw that we were watching, he stopped and walked away, as if he was ashamed. He knew that we thought the whole process very foolish, and he did not care to go on with it in our presence.

Bhagu, too, was a bhagat, and he was often called to other villages to perform phunkna.

For a time the Holy Spirit so convicted him of his sins that he told us he would not follow this practice any more; and a number of times we knew of his refusing to go when called. However, he must have missed the money formerly received for his services, for he hardened his heart against the light and returned to his evil practices. From that time he swiftly traveled the downward path. He became unprincipled and grew very bitter against the government. This is only the natural outcome of rejecting the gospel.

In this country it is a very common occurrence for people to be stung by scorpions. Usually in such a case a bhagat is called and phunkna is performed, though we have never known the sufferer to obtain any relief by this means. There are two kinds of scorpions—the small brown one whose poison causes twelve hours of terrible pain, but which seldom leaves any permanent injury; and the black scorpion, whose sting usually causes fever and delirium, and very often death.

When Mata Din, who was working for us, went home one night, he put his hand on the top of the low wall of his house and was stung

by a black scorpion. His father came running to borrow a lantern that he might go quickly and find a bhagat. The head man of the village went with him, for they wanted a very special bhagat, who would probably not come if called by a poor low caste man. The bhagat came, but could do no good. Poor Mata Din was a very sick man—delirious all that night and part of the next day. We were thankful, however, that his life was spared, and after quite a number of days he was able to return to his work.

While we were yet living in Allahabad, an old man lived just across the street from our house. He was very religious, and we were often awakened in the morning by his call, "*Ram, Ram, Sita Ram.*" He was crying to his god to wake up and hear his morning prayer.

This man had a very naughty little son who was a sore trial to his father and a pest to the whole neighborhood. They finally agreed that he had been bewitched. So a number of bhagats and Brahmans were called in, that the evil spirits might be expelled. Their part was to wave the branches of sacred trees over the boy, and the father's, to make an offering to the temple, of

sweets, fruit, butter, and milk. Then, too, he was required to make a feast for the Brahmans. The poor old man could not understand that he was appealing to the wrong source for the help he needed. We wished we could get the naughty, little fellow into our Sunday School and teach him that Jesus could cast out the evil spirit from the heart of a bad boy.

Our neighbors believe in witches and wizards and have a notion that when they cast an "evil eye" on people, they become ill and possessed with evil spirits. Badesi informed us one day that there was a man in his village who was casting the evil eye on people and declared that he ought to be punished. We asked him who it was, and he did not know, but since there was so much sickness in the village, he was sure some one must be guilty. Our opinion was that the "evil eye" was to be found in a filthy tank lying in the middle of the village.

We stayed for a short time in a house near the living quarters of some native people. We heard a little baby crying so much that we asked the mother one day if the child was sick. Very calmly she told us—as if it had been an every-day occurrence—that some one had cast an evil

eye upon the baby, and it had taken dysentery; but they had had phunkna performed, and the baby was all right now.

A very, very few of these people have begun to learn that our God will heal the sick in answer to prayer. One day a woman brought us a child who was sick with a fever. We thought, of course, that she wanted medicine, but she said quickly, "If I had wanted medicine, I would have gone to Saraon to the hospital. You prayed for one child I brought here, and he got well; and I want you to pray for this one, too, so that he will get well. This is not my child, but I brought him for his mother."

And so we prayed, thanking God that a tiny seed of faith was springing up into life, even in this darkened village. And He who went about doing good and healing all manner of sickness touched this little one and made him every whit whole.



The Water Carrier

FATHER AND SON

The parents look after the son, and God looks after the daughter. —"Mother India"

A HINDU who has no son considers himself the most hopeless of mortals. When he dies, he reasons, there will be no one to offer the sacrifices and perform the ceremonies necessary to release his spirit from the grip of Yama. Hence a Hindu will make any sacrifice that he believes will obtain from heaven the gift of a son.

At one time we had an old Brahman teacher who had married three wives, one after the other, but none of them had borne him sons, and he was a sadly disappointed man. He had to work very hard and even then found it impossible to support his three wives and his many daughters.

A wife knows that if she does not bear a son within a few years after her marriage another wife will be taken. She knows, too, that if the second wife bears a son, the first will be despised. So she prays and makes offerings and performs all sorts of ceremonies, in the hope that she may be favored with a son.

One day we saw a woman going through a performance for this purpose. She was walking round and round a large tree, winding hundreds of yards of string about its trunk. A Brahman seated near her was solemnly directing her maneuvers. Every few rounds he would command her to place before him a pice (half a cent). She must have been a poor woman, or he would certainly have demanded a rupee (thirty-two cents). She continued her winding until we grew tired of watching her and passed on.

If a son is born into a family, every care is taken to preserve his health. Many little girls have been purposely neglected since the government has stopped the murder of daughters; but the sons are given the best care of which the parents are capable.

We chanced to know of a wealthy family who went to the hills to spend the summer. The little son's teething season was due during that time, so a European trained nurse was hired to accompany the family, at a salary of three hundred rupees a month. The baby was perfectly well, but in case of sickness she would be ready with her efficient services.

If a son is sick, it is not uncommon to devote a little girl baby to the temple service. The ignorant parents hope to appease the wrath of the gods and save the life of the son by sacrificing the daughter to the life of a prostitute. These consecrated temple girls are not so common in the northern part of India as in the south. At first their services were confined to the temple—they were consecrated for singing, and for the use of the Brahmans alone, but now they have become public prostitutes. Parents see no wrong in thus making a vow that will

condemn a daughter to a lifelong career of sin and misery, and no disgrace is attached to them on this account.

According to the old Hindu custom, the temple girls were the only women who had the privilege of learning to read, dance, or sing; hence a well-bred, respectable woman would blush to attain to any of these accomplishments. Among the more enlightened this prejudice is breaking down, the women are being educated; but even to-day a well-bred woman must not allow her voice to be heard in song beyond the walls of her own home.

The poorest Hindu will make a great sacrifice in the desire to have a son restored to health. An example of this came to our attention in an old man who was doing our cooking. His eldest son became very ill, and the father made a vow that at the Mohammedan festival of Muharram he would lay an offering of flowers upon the beautiful, fairy-like mosque to be unveiled on the last day; also that he would spend ten rupees in making a feast for the poor. Ten rupees! It was the man's whole salary for a month, and he had a large family to support.

In due time the son recovered, and the old

man might easily have reasoned within himself, "Why should I give the money now?" But no —he had promised, and he must fulfil his vow.

One might think him a very conscientious, honest sort of man to keep his promise in this way. But wait—let us see how he managed without his month's salary. One evening after an early meal we went out for a walk, leaving the old cook to finish his work and go home when he was ready. We did not take a long walk, however, and returned before Chotu expected us. As he opened the tall gate of the yard to go out, we stood just in front of it ready to come in. We were surprised to see him still there, and he was surprised to see us back so soon. We were still more surprised, however, to see in his hands a bottle of kerosene oil and quite a bundle of charcoal tied up in a rag. He was so taken aback at being caught that he let the bundle of charcoal fall and stood before us trembling with fright.

The poor man's religion taught him to make vows and keep them even at the expense of honesty. It did not matter how he got provisions for his family so long as his son recovered and he made his offering.

The Mohammedans also make vows of this sort for the sake of their sons. An old man had a son who was grown and had a family of his own. The son became so ill that they despaired of his life. The old father and the son together made a vow that if the young man should recover, they would make a taziya (a tissue paper imitation of a mosque) every year at Muharram time. Also they promised to raise two extra fine cocks to be sacrificed at the tomb of Gaji Miya, about seven miles away.

The son recovered, and the taziya was faithfully made each year. In the meantime, neither father nor son could see any harm in stealing grain from any accessible field, if he could get away without being caught. The cocks were well fed, mostly on stolen grain, but at least one of them never became a sacrifice at the tomb of Gaji Miya. Instead, he fell down our well and met a tragic death. Whether his mate met an honorable fate at the tomb, we never heard.

The son became ill again, and this time he did not recover. His little son is following in his dead father's footsteps, for he was caught stealing about twelve pounds of sugar from our storeroom while we were away holding a meet-

ing. A Mohammedan, who considered it very important that he should be on time for the twelve o'clock prayers at the mosque on Friday, had put him up through a very small high window. It was too high for any one to reach without help, so we had considered the sugar quite safe, especially since some of us were usually about.

We had been in India only a short time, when one evening our attention was suddenly attracted by a great noise a short distance from our house. Evidently it was the sound of merry-making. As it was not a regular Hindu feast day, we were curious to know the cause and sallied forth. We easily located the place from whence the sound came, for a great crowd had gathered in front of the home of a man of the poorer class. No one else seemed to be rejoicing; in fact, the neighbors paid no attention to what was going on, and that made us all the more curious to know the cause of the hilarity.

An old woman was standing at the edge of the crowd, and to her we applied for information. "Why are they beating the drums and playing these instruments to-day?" we asked.

"*Bea hua*" (A son has been born), she re-

plied. That was the first we had seen of a Hindu's rejoicing over his firstborn son; but since then it has been a frequent occurrence.

Badesi is one of our men who carries our water and helps to wash our clothes. He asked for three days' leave of absence from his work, that he might go and make a feast for his father who had died some time before. A priest would come and exact as much money as possible from him and then would make him believe that he had saved his father from hell. The poor old man had had a very unhappy time during the last few years of his life, because he was very childish and could not get along with his son. Many times he came to us with the complaint that his son would not give him food, and for awhile we gave him grain from our relief fund. Now that he is dead, however, Badesi would not think of leaving undone what every Hindu son considers his most sacred duty—that of performing the rites which are supposed to release his father from the grip of Satan.

There is a yearly festival when every man whose father is dead must have his head shaved, after going through a certain ceremony. We hardly recognize some of our neighbors when

we meet them again after this head-shaving.

Badesi has attended our morning prayers for a number of years and has received a good deal of gospel light. He knows the way of Jesus Christ is the right way and that his heathen rites and ceremonies are of no avail. Still he is afraid to take the way of the Cross for fear of persecution from his caste brethren. He is always very glad to have us go to his village and hold our meetings. We are praying that he may soon have the courage to step out from his heathen faith into the glorious liberty of the children of God.



Snake Charmers

MERRY-MAKING

Let us eat, drink and be merry; for to-morrow we die.
—Epicurean Philosophy

THERE is little enough in the life of Hindus that would appeal to the Occidental mind as pleasure, yet they spend much time in this pursuit. There are, of course, many serious-minded people who observe all the religious ceremonies entirely with a religious motive; but there are many others who have turned their sacred feasts into mere pleasure parties, with just a hurried puja, or worship, or a bath in the Ganges to ease the conscience and appease the wrath of the gods.

An ordinary feast is never given except when an Indian wishes to entertain his European friends. So whenever we see preparations on foot for a feast, we may know it is to be some sort of religious gathering. Sometimes it is a funeral feast, the object of which is to help the deceased to attain to a state of rest. Otherwise, they reason, his spirit would haunt the living relatives and make life miserable for them. A boy who used to attend our meetings told us they were having a feast for an aged aunt. It was a long time after death, so we asked, "Why are you having the feast now, when she has been dead so long?"

"We did not intend to have a feast for her," he said, "because we did not like her, but her spirit has been giving us so much trouble that we have had to do it."

Some time ago we were visiting among the women of a near-by village, when we came upon a company of well-dressed Brahman women who were scouring immense brass platters. We stopped to speak to them and asked, "What are you going to do with all these big dishes?"

"We are preparing for a funeral feast," they said. "Much food will be cooked, and many

people will enjoy it." We were impressed with the fact that their joy in the anticipation of the feast seemed to outweigh their sorrow for the loss of the loved one.

Work can always be put off or neglected for a time if there is a wedding in the neighborhood, and on such an occasion several days are spent in feasting and idleness. We had some carpenters engaged to make doors and windows for our village house and hoped soon to have the work completed. They had worked only a day or two, however, when they gathered up their tools, saying they were going to attend a feast and would not be back for a few days. We were dismayed, but nothing could persuade them to change their minds and give up their pleasure.

A Hindu wedding is an expensive function, especially for the bride's father. In the caste to which many of our neighbors belong, the bride's father must give to the bridegroom's household a cow, an ox, a buffalo, about eighty pounds of grain, and a full set of brass dishes for household use. In this caste the women take no part in the merry-making, but the men spend about three days at a wedding.

A man of the merchant caste, whose father was dead, made arrangements for the marriage of his younger brother. He hired a very fine military band to play for the wedding, and we asked, "Does it not cost you a great deal to have this band?"

"Yes, it is expensive," he replied, "but I must spend two thousand rupees on this wedding, and I may as well hire this band as to spend the money in some other way."

The Hindus look forward to the wedding season, which lasts from the end of February until June. When this season begins, they have just gathered in their winter crops and have no farm work to do. Also, most of them have plenty to eat at this time of the year, which is not often the case at any other season, unless they are able to get some employment aside from their farming.

Hindus take great delight in wrestling, and in some of the larger villages yearly wrestling matches are held. Very often the wrestlers are injured or even killed. Such occurrences, however, only add color to the entertainment, for, like more enlightened pleasure-seekers, these people crave intense excitement.

Sometimes the people are entertained by professional singers, who go about singing wherever they can hope for a little remuneration. Their songs are usually of a character not to be appreciated by pure-minded people and very often are entirely obscene.

In the cold season when there are no weddings, Hindus love to spend their long winter evenings sitting around a fire listening to stories. Some of these, like their songs, are not fit to be heard and only corrupt their already foul minds to a greater extent. Others are of a very childish character, somewhat like Grimm's fairy tales and Aesop's fables. Still others tell of the wonderful exploits of their gods.

Many of our neighbors now leave their little fires and come to sit around our fireside, enjoying what is to them real comfort. On these occasions we tell the gospel story as simply as we can. They listen just as long as we will talk and sometimes reproach us for closing the meeting. They say, "We would listen all night if you would talk to us." We are praying that their listening will not be in vain, but that some will heed the call of God and obtain His everlasting joy. Many of them are convinced of the truth of

the gospel, but as yet they have not the courage to turn away from everything dear to them and accept a life entirely new in every phase.

Some years ago a well-educated Mohammedan died in Siwait. He had at one time worked in Allahabad as a lawyer and had finally attained to the position of judge. He had also held a large tract of land which was let out to petty tenants, and thus he had gathered considerable wealth. When he died, it was found that he had set apart a sum of money from which five hundred rupees was to be taken every year to make a feast for the poor. Each person who comes to this feast receives twelve chapaties, unleavened flat cakes, a half pound of goat's flesh curry, a liberal helping of rice cooked with sugar, cocoanut, and raisins. The aim of the feast is to cause the poor who eat the food to remember the judge and pray for the well-being of his soul; but most of them remember it only as a time of merry-making.

The Muharram is a Mohammedan festival of mourning in memory of the violent death of Husain, one of the grandsons of Mohammed. It is interesting to note the various ways in which this festival is kept by the different classes of Mohammedans. To some it is a time of most solemn

mourning, to others an occasion of great festivity and drunkenness; while one sect looks upon it with disdain.

In the northern part of India this feast is kept with great show. Shortly before the beginning of the ten days' celebration, a horse is chosen which is to represent the one upon which Husain rode. This horse becomes the central figure of an elaborate ceremony, after which he is supposed to understand that he is in mourning for his dead master. The horse is called Ramzana (fasting), and the Mohammedans declare that during the next ten days, no matter what kind of food is placed before the animal, he will taste nothing.

Every day during the celebration, men go about the streets beating monstrous drums with such violence, that the drummers become exhausted after a few minutes and are obliged to change off with another shift. This is supposed to represent the noise of the battle that was raging at the time of Husain's death. The drum-beating reaches its climax on the night preceding the last day, when every available drum is brought out at the same time, and the noise is deafening.

On the tenth day the Ramzana horse breaks fast, but is said to eat only sweets. On this day also miniature mosques, called taziya, made of tissue and tinsel paper, are carried about the streets. In Allahabad there is a very beautiful little mosque of white marble which is never unveiled except on the last day of this feast. All through the year it is kept boarded up and presents an ugly appearance, but on this day the boards are removed, and people come from all over the city to gaze upon its fairy-like beauty.

Many vows are paid here. During the year when trouble of any sort overtakes the people, they vow that if they are delivered they will make an offering at this mosque. So money and food-stuffs in great abundance are brought, and the mosque itself is decked with flowers.

As a grand finale to the ten days' ceremonies, all the drums and all the drummers from different parts of the city join in a great procession to the cemetery where they pretend to bury Husain. At intervals in the procession there are ox-carts loaded with great kettles of food, which is dealt out to all who will come and receive it. The din of the drums is indescribable—one continuous roar that rings in one's ears for days after-

ward. The horse occupies a prominent place in the procession and is literally worshiped by the more ignorant of Mohammed's followers.

One day this great procession was passing our house, when some one called out, "Come and see the procession!" One of the missionaries who was working in the kitchen happened to have a bowl in her hand, and in her hurry she did not stop to set it down when she stepped outside. One of the food carts was passing just then, and the man who was dealing out the food, seeing the lady's bowl, reached for it to fill it for her. Of course, the lady drew back, to the amusement of the others, and the procession passed on.

We were once invited by a family of ten widows to visit them and see how they kept this "feast of mourning." They had one room, set apart for their religious devotions, which contained a variety of symbols, and where lights were always kept burning. Every evening during the feast the women gathered in front of this room, and singing their religious songs and beating their breasts they mourned for Husain. Some of them actually had tears in their eyes, as if they were really moved by the sorrow they

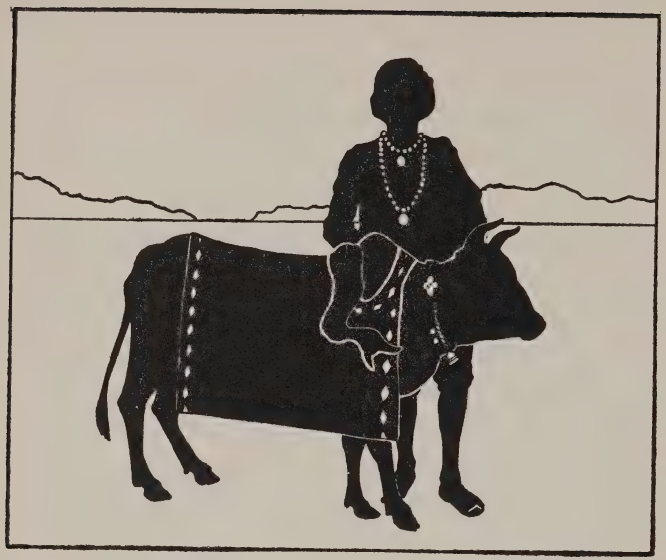
professed to feel. After going through this performance for an hour or more, they sat down and partook of a certain kind of sweetmeat, which to them has somewhat the same significance as the bread and wine of the communion service have to us.

Should we journey a little farther south, we would find that Muharram is there looked upon in a very different light. The solemnity is entirely lacking. There are the drums and the horse, to be sure, but the horse is not supposed to fast, nor do the people mourn. In that part of the country it is customary for the men and boys to paint their naked bodies with black and yellow stripes; and then, attaching long false tails and short erect ears, they pose as tigers. In this guise they appear in the bazaars where they go through all sorts of dances and other antics for the amusement of the people. As a reward for their foolish performances, they receive pice from admiring crowds. They even go to the homes of the Europeans and dance for the amusement of the children, who reward them with a few coppers.

Drunkenness is prevalent among the people at the time of this great feast. To be sure, the

Mohammedan is supposed to abhor liquor, but many forget this, and drunken riots abound on every hand. Thus their religion has proved to be a curse and a snare to them.

The thought occurs to us that, after all, this wild and wicked reveling is no greater an evil than the modern celebration of Christmas among so-called Christian people, when the birthday of our pure and holy Christ is observed with drunkenness and reveling and becomes a snare to many people in Christian lands. Oh, that those who profess the name of Christ would so order their lives that they would be shining examples of righteousness to those who walk in darkness and dwell in the land of the shadow of death.



The Sacred Cow

THINGS SACRED TO INDIA

I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.
—St. Paul at Athens

THERE are many common things in India that are held to be most sacred, and consequently must be highly respected and revered by all. The banyan and pipal trees are sacred and are often marked by little wayside shrines. If a man who is traveling wishes to make an offering, it is quite a proper act for

him to establish a shrine under one of these trees. Water is ceremoniously offered, though not in quantities large enough to penetrate to the roots and be of any benefit to the trees. A lota, or jug, is filled with water and placed there to be poured at the foot of the trunk.

At one time when we wished to buy wood for burning, we were told that there was a dead banyan tree for sale in Siwait. We found, however, that our Hindu wood-cutters would not cut the tree, since they held it to be sacred. When one of these trees dies, it is cut down and used by Mohammedans, or else it lies and rots away.

In olden days the sama plant was extensively worshiped because a highly intoxicating liquor was made from it. It was supposed to be by the courage and energy derived from this drink that some of the gods performed great exploits. The sama of to-day seems to be quite a different plant, however, and is used more as a food. That which matures during the rainy season is much sought after by men whose fathers have died, for they consider this as the most proper food for the dead.

We asked a man about this once, and he

smiled as he told us that if the sama raised during the rainy season can be obtained, people will not accept any other grain as a food for their dead fathers. He had heard enough of the gospel message to realize the folly of this heathenish custom.

In our district the sama is considered valuable because it furnishes fodder for the cattle at a season when everything else has dried up, and also because its grain is a food for the poor. A woman once said to us, "We look forward to the sama crop because we have that for our own feed. Our wheat, barley and bajra (fitches) must be sold to help pay our land rent, but the sama we have for ourselves."

Sama is sown at the beginning of the hot season, and as we look out over the parched ground and see here and there a patch of this rich, green grain waving in the hot wind, it is a beautiful and refreshing sight. It is a crop that matures very quickly, so it does not remain long to gladden the eye, but is soon cut down, leaving the entire landscape a brown waste, except for the deep-rooted trees that draw their nourishment from far below the surface.

Rivers, too, are sacred in this land—especially the Ganges, the Narbada, the Brahmaputra, and other large rivers. The Ganges is often called Ganga Mai, or Mother Ganges. The confluence of the Ganges and Jumna Rivers is considered especially sacred, for is it not here that two of the great deities meet? To bathe in the waters of both these great rivers at the same time is thought to be most meritorious.

The ignorant worshipers are made to believe that the Narbada River had its origin in the sweat that dripped from Siva's brow, and many are the pice, annas, and rupees that find their way into its murky waters on account of this legend. The waters of the Ganges are believed to flow down from heaven through Siva's hair.

An analysis of the name Brahmaputra gives us the two words, Brahma and putr, putr meaning a son. What, then, could be more sacred than the son of the god Brahma, who is considered the greatest of all the gods?

The people affirm most solemnly that the waters of these rivers—especially those of the Ganges—possess wonderful healing qualities. Rather, as a matter of fact, they are reeking with almost every known disease.

Water that has been touched by a low caste person must not, even by accident, touch the body of one of higher caste. Yet people of all castes bathe in these sacred rivers at the same time and several times during a bath fill their mouths with the water and eject it. So long as the water is in the river, however, it is sacred.

The city of Puri, where the great Jagannath car is kept, is held to be so sacred that the Hindus prostrate themselves when crossing the road that leads to it. Many times we have seen men, when crossing the Grand Trunk Road at Balasore—a distance of more than a hundred miles from Puri—turn toward the south, fall on their knees, and kiss the ground, because that road leads straight to their beloved city. Before British law put a stop to such crimes, men threw themselves and even their children in front of the Jagannath car and were crushed to death under its heavy weight.

Cattle with extra horns, tails, or feet are held to be very sacred, and the fakirs, or priests, who own them make an easy living by the offerings that are made. At a religious gathering once we saw a cow with a little horn in the middle of its forehead. We had a strong suspi-

cion that the wonderful horn was ingeniously attached and were sorely tempted to give it a tug and see if we could pull it off; but we did not yield, as we might have gotten ourselves into serious trouble.

One time a man passed near our house with a very tiny cow that had a fifth foot growing out of its side. This man was fast growing wealthy by the offerings that were made to this wonderful creature. All cattle are believed to be inhabited by the spirits of the dead, but these freaks are looked upon more as gods than animals.

All tombs and temples are held to be most sacred, and even the British government respects this idea of the people. Temples and mosques, no matter how old and rickety they may become, are never torn down unless it is by the common consent of the community and their authorities. We knew of an American who had taken up a tract of land near the frontier and was attempting to do missionary work there. On one corner of his land stood a small Hindu temple, which gave him so much distress of mind that he determined to destroy it in spite of the law. He and another man went in the dead of

the night and broke it down. His life was endangered by this act, for the natives arose in a mob and would have killed him if he had not disappeared for a time until their anger had cooled.

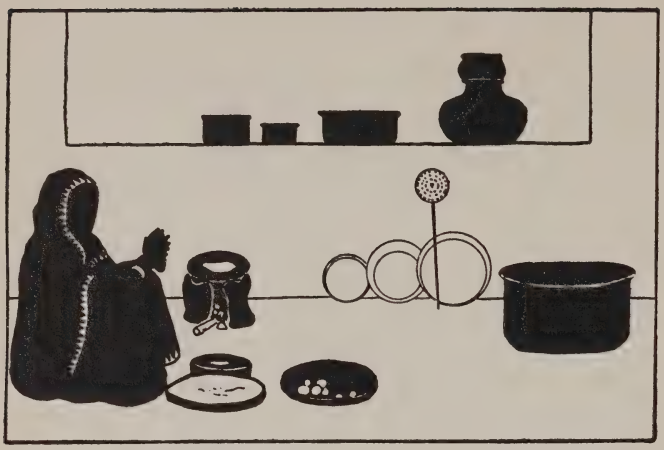
Another man who went up into one of the north countries to do missionary work was given a house which stood on a very large sacred rock. He wished to move the house to a more convenient spot, and when he had done so he set fire to the rubbish that was left. The heat of the fire caused the rock to split, and a part of it fell down and spoiled a spring of water which was also sacred. This occurred a number of years ago, but the native ruler of the place is even now unwilling to give this man a passport to enter the country again.

We wished to enter the Mohammedan mosque in connection with the Taj Mahal at Agra and were told that we could do so if we would remove our shoes and leave them outside. We did so and went in to admire the beautiful architecture which is famed the wide world over.

At another time we were passing a very large Hindu temple in Allahabad, when a man asked

us if we did not wish to go inside and witness the ceremonies. It was at the time of a festival, and an immense crowd had gathered. We were told we must remove our shoes and leave them on the steps. We felt rather dubious about this proceeding, fearing we might not find them on our return; for throngs of people were passing up and down the steps all the time. We decided to take the risk, however, and found our shoes quite safe when we returned.

The Mohammedans hold their Koran, or holy book, very sacred indeed, and it is their opinion that we do not treat our Bible with due respect. They keep their Koran wrapped in several thicknesses of black cloth and never think of leaving it open when they are not reading it. It is their rule that the book must never be placed below a person's waistline. Thus, to place the Koran on the floor would be a very great sin. The Hindu treats his sacred books in much the same manner, but there are not so many Hindus who have sacred books, because few of them are ever taught to read.



A Hindu Cooking

A VILLAGE FAMILY

Disease, dirt, and ignorance are the characteristics of my country. —A Hindu nobleman

THE family to whom we are introducing you lives in Barhaiya and are typical villagers of the farmer caste. We first made their acquaintance when we were building our house. When two of the rooms were nearly completed, we went out in search of some grass to be used for thatching the roof. We found several people who had a small amount of sarpat to sell—a coarse grass which grows from eight to ten feet in height. It is fit for nothing but

thatch, being too sharp-edged for the cattle to eat. As we stood bargaining with Data Din for a rupee's worth of this grass, we saw a woman running across the field toward us. As she came nearer, she called out, "Oh, Miss Sahib, I have eight annas worth of sarpat to sell."

"All right, where is your grass? We will come and see it."

She led us to her fifty bundles of grass. As it was fine and long, we told her we would take it and wrote down her name so that we could send a man to get it for us.

This was our introduction to Bhaktini. We were impressed with her name, which means a very religious woman. This Bhaktini, however, is anything but religious. To be sure, she observes her caste rules closely enough to avoid getting into trouble, but she never attends religious festivals or worship of any sort.

When we had settled with Bhaktini about the grass, she ran to a spot where a baby was crying most lustily. We passed by that way and found her trying to quiet the little child whom she had left alone when she came to tell us about the grass. At that time this was Bhaktini's only child, little Jagi. She had had five other chil-

dren, but all had died while still quite young; and this fact does not surprise us when we see what sort of a mother Bhaktini is.

Not that she is unkind and unloving. Oh no, Bhaktini loves her children very dearly; but she has no idea how to take care of them and cannot see any logic whatsoever in cleanliness. We doubt if her little ones have ever been bathed or washed with soap, though, of course, they are occasionally well rubbed with mustard oil.

When Bhaktini comes to call on us, we feel as if we should like to receive her out in the open air, or have some strong disinfectant about. She puts on a new sari when Bhagu buys one for her, and we are very doubtful whether she takes it off for washing more than once, or possibly twice, before it is ready to drop in rags. In this hot country, where one perspires so freely without putting forth the slightest effort, the result may be readily imagined.

Jagi has grown to be quite a big girl now and is no longer the baby—she has a little sister. They are both as dirty and happy as village children can be. They have one advantage, however, over most of the little village girls—Bhagu, their father, loves them dearly and is

often seen hugging and kissing them. Such demonstrations of affection usually are reserved for little boys, but Bhagu has no sons, so he lavishes this on his two little daughters.

Bhagu and Bhaktini live in a house that is quite apart from the others; at least, it stands at a distance of fifty feet from the rest of the village. That in itself is worthy of mention, for Hindus usually have their houses so close that they touch one another. Needless to say, their house is built of mud, and the walls are not so high as Bhaktini's head. Bhagu who is a tall man, has to bend almost double to go through the doors. We say doors, because most village homes boast of only one, while this house has two rooms, with a door in each. The roof is thatched with sarpat and sugar cane leaves, but this has been done so crudely that the rain is by no means kept out.

During one rainy season the family awoke one night to find their house standing in about six inches of water, for the rains were heavy, and the water rose higher than it had for many years. They were forced to leave the house for several days, until the water had subsided. However, they were far more fortunate than the

people of another district, where, about the same time, whole villages were entirely destroyed by floods. A tract covering four hundred square miles stood under ten feet of water, and a large percentage of the inhabitants were drowned. The only place of refuge was the railway embankment, and to it the people and their cattle flocked by the hundreds.

As to Bhaktini's household furniture—should you look into her house, you would wonder where it was. There are two beds, one in each room. They are not as long as the occupants, but that does not matter, for they can curl up somewhat. On one of these Bhagu sleeps in state, while the other is occupied by Bhaktini and the two children.

There is the large basket that Bhaktini uses when she goes out to cut grass for the oxen. (We forgot to mention the fact that the oxen —or rather, a small ox and a small buffalo— share Bhagu's room.) Then, too, there is the wooden stick of a plow with which the animals scratch up the little field where Bhagu sows his rice, chena (millet), and wheat. In one corner stand some earthen jars, in which the grain is stored. This is a complete survey of all in

Bhaktini's house that could possibly be termed furniture.

Oh, yes—we should mention the dishes. There is a brass lota from which they drink their water; also a brass dish called a thali, which is sort of a plate with a perpendicular edge about an inch high, from which they eat their rice. Bhagu has his share first, and afterward Bhaktini and the children eat from the same dish. Spoons, knives, and forks are quite unnecessary; they would not use them if they had them.

Their food consists principally of coarse, red-dish-colored rice, or a black, dirty-looking bread made of ground bajra (fitches). Occasionally they have whole-wheat cakes called chapatis, and when the barley is harvested they eat barley bread. Perhaps once a month they have a little goat's meat, and sometimes Bhaktini goes to the weekly bazaar and buys a few vegetables, from which she makes bhunjia (a vegetable dish seasoned with red peppers).

Peace does not always reign in this household, for Bhagu has a violent temper, and Bhaktini a very decided mind of her own. One day she appeared at our door saying, "Miss Sahib, will you please give me a needle?"

"Certainly, Bhaktini—are you going to sew?"

"No, Bhagu goes out into the fields and gets thorns in his feet, and if I cannot take them out he gets angry and gives me a beating. So I want a needle with which to pick out his thorns."

Bhagu cannot see very well, as he has been afflicted with sore eyes—a very common disease in India. Through neglect their condition became so serious that he almost lost his sight. Consequently, he cannot see well when the sun is bright and is apt to stumble into thorn bushes and thistles.

One day Bhagu was driving the oxen under a large tree near our house, where they were treading out grain. By accident he ran into a limb of the tree and hurt his face. The tree belonged to him, so in his anger he called for a man to bring a saw and cut off the limb. While the man was sawing, he was nursing his bruises, but soon his anger cooled, and he stopped the proceedings.

"But," said the man, "the limb is half off now."

"Never mind, there are some mangoes on it. Let them ripen first."

This happened several years ago and the tree still bears the marks of Bhagu's anger. We asked him not long ago if he remembered how those saw marks came there, and he told us just how it happened.

At one time we wished to build a kitchen under the same tree, but Bhagu objected, because that would defile his place. "And," he said, "this is Jagi's inheritance, so it must not be spoiled."

We have described this family to give our readers a faint idea of the living conditions and worldly possessions of the average villagers. Some who are considered rich have a little more comfort than this, but there are thousands upon thousands who have even less of this world's goods than Bhagu and Bhaktini have.



Hindu Children

"MY BULLA IS NOT"

In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. —Bible

HOW deeply these words touched our hearts when they fell on our ears, for they came to us as the despairing cry of a mother's heart.

When first we saw little Bulla, he was a tiny brown baby. We had not been long in the

neighborhood and were making a round of calls one afternoon in the village of Barhaiya, when we saw a big, strong-looking woman sitting outside her house, leaning against the wall. She held her baby on her knees in such a position that the sun shone full on his little body. He had been well rubbed with mustard oil, and nothing is so good as a sun bath after that—so thinks a Hindustani mother.

Bulla's mother would have been horrified at the idea of giving him a daily bath with soap and water. She would have felt sure he would die if subjected to such a treatment. But whenever she could afford to buy enough mustard oil, she gave him a good oiling and rubbing; and how she enjoyed sitting out with her baby afterward and letting him bask in the warm sunshine —when she was not too busy in the fields.

We learned that little Bulla was her only boy. She had two daughters, but how glad she had been when this little son came to her.

After this first acquaintance we often stopped to talk with the woman, for she was always pleasant and ready to listen. When we spoke of Jesus, she did not seem to understand very well, but we hoped that her heart might

be touched and her understanding enlightened. She often came to our house, and as soon as little Bulla was old enough he would toddle along after her.

In due time the little boy came to our Sunday School with his two older sisters and some of his cousins. He became such a familiar little figure that if we did not see him for a few days we wondered where he was. He was fairer than most of the children of his caste, which was the Pasi, or hog raisers. He seldom wore any clothes, even when he came to Sunday School, for that is not customary with little boys of his caste.

One day, when little Bulla must have been about five years old, we heard a terrible commotion over in Barhaiya. It was the same awful shouting and crying that we had heard when old Bhagu's house had burned down, and we rushed out to see if there was smoke rising anywhere in the village. There was no sign of it, however, and we wondered what the cause of the commotion might be.

Before long some one came over from the village and told us a sad story indeed. Little Bulla had been playing near the well where sev-

eral pair of oxen were drawing water by means of long, thick ropes. In some way he had gotten in the way of one of these ropes and had been violently thrown into the well, his little body striking against the rough, brick sides as he went down. The little bruised and lifeless form had been drawn up and laid on the ground to await the arrival of a police official, who examines the bodies of those killed by accident.

In this case the official did not arrive until more than twenty-four hours after the accident. There the little body had to lie—lovingly watched through the long hours of the night lest the jackals molest it, and by day lest the pitiless vultures tear it to pieces.

We visited the poor mother, and what an image of despair she was! She sat in almost the same spot where we had seen her first, but how different the look on her face! She did not smile to-day, and her head was bowed down with grief. As we spoke to her, she looked up with a world of sorrow in her large eyes, saying mournfully, "*Mera Bulla nahin hai!*" (My Bulla is not!)

This poor, bereaved mother had not learned to trust in Jesus, and her cry was one of utmost

despair. Another tiny baby boy had come into her home, but this older son had been her joy and hope and pride—and now he was forever gone! Oh, how we wished that we had more lives to give, that the light of eternal hope and joy in Christ might shine into the benighted souls of despairing women like the mother of little Bulla. To be sure, there are many hopeless souls in so-called Christian lands as well, but they have many an opportunity to grasp the glorious hope that does not fade away in time of bereavement. Who will comfort the dusky sisters of Bulla's despairing mother?

"My Bulla is not." This is only one of the anguished cries that daily arise from many sorrow-stricken hearts all over this dark land. Is not God calling some young man, some young woman who reads these lines, to carry the joyous tidings to India's waiting shores, so that some who would otherwise die without hope in Christ might find the blessed Comforter? Oh, what a joy to see one soul leaving the darkness of heathendom to walk in the light of life! What a glorious wage! Who could think of accepting in its stead any glittering bauble that the world has to offer?



Sowing

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE BAMBOO

If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul: then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

—Isaiah

AMAR was a very old man indeed. He was a Hindu and all his life had believed implicitly everything that the gurus, or teachers, and Brahmans had taught him. He clung to all the superstitious ideas of his race, and it would have taken a miracle to shake his devotion and change his religion. Yet the pow-

er of our God is able to perform just such miracles as that.

Several years ago old Amar came home from his field one day and sat down under a mango tree, troubled and silent. His daughter-in-law came up with a basketful of dry grass which she had gathered for the oxen from the surrounding fields. She, too, sat down and began shaking out the dirt which clung to the roots of the grass. In this district the people are so very poor that no pasture land can be afforded for the cattle, so the women go out and dig up by the roots the tiny bits of worthless grass growing in the fields and by the roadside, and the starved oxen eat it ravenously.

It had been an extremely sultry day. Not a breath of air had been stirring, and now heavy clouds hung over the horizon. It was not yet time for the rainy season, and as old Amar looked at the rising bank of clouds he said, "I am afraid the gods are against us—the bamboo will blossom this year."

"But, Father," protested the girl, "we had early rain last year, and still the crops were good, for the rains came again at the regular time."

"Yes, child, but you are young; you have not

seen so many years as I have. You will see that if we have rain now we shall have none in Sawan (July) and Bhadon (August); and, too, you will see the bamboo blossom for the first time in your life. I wonder if the Padri sahib log (missionaries) will help us if there is a famine."

The girl was silent. She was very young. She had been married to Amar's youngest son when she was only two and a half years old; and now, having reached the age of fifteen, she had been living with the husband for a few months. She would not dispute the word of one so old as Amar. She had often heard her people say that the bamboo tree blossoms only in the year of famine. She had never seen it blossom and wondered if it would this year; and if so, what color the flowers would be. She wondered, too, what they would eat, and where she would go to find grass for the oxen.

The clouds came on, and the rain fell. The air became fresh, and the awful heat was allayed for a time. Little blades of green grass appeared in the barren fields. The women laughed and chatted together as their task of gathering grass became a little easier, but old Amar shook his head and was sad. Some of the young men felt

inclined to laugh at him and plowed their fields in the hope of obtaining a good crop.

The time came when the fields should have been flooded with water, but instead, the blazing sun shone down day after day. A few clouds floated mockingly about, but no rain fell. The young men looked serious now and said that after all old Amar was right.

At last, late in August, a few showers came, and all rushed to their fields to put in their seeds. They worked as they had never worked before. Again the clouds disappeared, however; the fields dried up, and the seeds that had sprouted were burned. Now their last hope of a crop was gone.

About this time, Nanka, who had been up in the north country in the army, came home for a month's holiday, and he said that in the district where he had been conditions were still worse. People were leaving the district because they could get nothing to eat there, and some were lying down to die by the roadside because they had no strength to go further.

When we at the mission house heard the tragic news from the far country, we began to wonder whether there would be similar suffering in our own neighborhood. "I do not

think," said one, "that conditions will be so serious here that people will die of starvation, but there will be much suffering among our neighbors, and we shall have to do something for them. It may be that God is allowing this time of famine to come so that we can reach the souls of the people by first relieving their bodily sufferings."

In the meantime the hot winds were continually blowing, and the hot sunshine was steadily blazing down, until very little green could be seen in the fields. The people worked very hard at their wells, and this kept some little patches watered. These wells were all that made the difference between our locality and others where the wells were too shallow to retain water in a dry season. In this way our neighbors raised a little bajra, or fitches, a little chana, or millet, and a few potatoes, thus furnishing themselves enough to keep soul and body together for the time being.

When the cold winds of winter set in and influenza swept over the country, the suffering of the poor people was indeed a pitiful sight. In Siwait several were dying every day. In Badalpur, Barhaiya, Hajiganj, and Sarsa, as well as

in other villages further away, half the people were sick, and there was no one to take care of them. One poor man who died in Badalpur, having no relatives to carry his body to the Ganges or to bury him, was thrown out into the field. We were kept awake at night by the howling of the jackals as they devoured his wasted body. It was a dreadful and melancholy sound and kept before us by night the pictures of awful suffering that our eyes looked upon by day.

Most of the missionaries themselves became victims of the epidemic, but they trusted in God and refused the many influenza cures that suddenly sprang up. All were soon restored to health and ready to do something to relieve the sufferings of others. But what could we do? Although so many needed help, it seemed that our hands were tied. Funds were short, and we had given out all the old clothes we had been able to gather up.

One day a bright thought came to one of our little group. "I have a friend in Allahabad," he said, "who, I believe, would be able to help us to secure some clothes, which we could give out to some of these poor people who are suffer-

ing with the cold." He went to town and came back delighted. He had found a place where a mistake had been made in the cutting of hundreds of horse blankets. They had all been cut a yard too long, and the extra pieces were now being sold for relief work at the rate of nine rupees a hundredweight.

"I have ordered four hundredweight," he said, "and we can sew the pieces together and make a goodly number of blankets to give out. There will be some delay, however, as they have to write to S— for a permit before they can let us have the blanketing."

That night it was bitterly cold—at least for a country like India, and for a people who have absolutely no bedding and very little clothing. Even the Major was cold, and when our friend called on him the next morning he said, "Say, it was cold last night! I could not get enough covers over me. I thought about those 'poor beggars' (a pet name for the natives), and I think I shall let you have half of those blankets right away, for I am sure the permit will be given."

So the pieces were bought and soon sewed up into nice warm blankets. Our neighbors were

told that there was some work to be done at the house of Padri sahib, and that every one who would put in three days' work should receive a blanket. They flocked in, and the able-bodied were put to work, while those who were too weak or too old to work were given blankets free.

Old Amar was among the number of those who came, and he was set to work threshing out the mission bajra. We felt sorry for the poor old man as he toiled among the thirty or more younger people and gave him his blanket when he had done only one day's work. It was the first bit of bedding he had ever possessed, and he felt rich indeed. He did not mind so much now if he did not have enough food to satisfy his hunger, for he could wrap up in his warm blanket and feel snug and comfortable.

One poor woman who came to work for a blanket for herself and her child had, up to this time, only an old piece of cloth very much like unbleached sheeting for a cover. One morning she came all humped over with the cold and snatched this piece of cloth off a pole where she had hung it the day before. She was almost crying when she told us how she and her

child had suffered during the night because she had forgotten to take the bit of cloth home.

How that little incident touched our hearts! We should not have considered that piece of cloth nearly enough cover to keep us warm on a night like that. Usually we have frost two or three nights during the winter, and that had been one of the frosty nights. With no fire and no covering, and perhaps not even a door that could be closed, we can scarcely imagine what a night it must have been for that poor woman and her child.

About this time something happened that put another idea into our minds. Old Bhagu's house in Barhaiya burned down, and he and his wife and child were utterly deprived of the little worldly goods they had possessed. That night they slept out under the trees, with no covering at all. The next day his wife came over to the mission house and received a blanket for herself and one for Bhagu, and one of the lady missionaries took a piece of blanketing and made a little coat for the child. When one of our number saw the coat, he said suddenly, "Say, would it not be possible to make a hundred little coats for our Sunday School children?"

The ladies looked doubtful at first when they thought of the time and work involved, but they decided that it would be worth the sacrifice to see a hundred little children, each the proud owner of a nice warm garment. So the hundred coats were made, and Christmas morning saw a hundred shining brown faces, each beaming above a gray coat. No, they were not quite all beaming, for some of the little ones did not like the process of being dressed in such an unaccustomed garment, especially as it was getting late in the day and the sun was hot. Those who were old enough realized, however, that in the cold mornings and evenings, as well as at night, these coats would be very welcome indeed.

A wealthy Indian gentleman donated a hundred blankets to be given out in this neighborhood, so altogether about two hundred and fifty were distributed. As the winter wore on, food became more and more scarce. What the people had raised on their little plots near the wells was all eaten up, and we missionaries felt we must do something more. We had no luxuries to give up, but we said, "We will give up most of our sugar supply and use the money to start a relief fund."

For two months we used very little sugar, and the very bajra that the blanket-earners had threshed was also put into the fund. The news of this fund was spread abroad, and friends sent in donations from here and there. God saw and pitied, and money came in to relieve our suffering neighbors. Grain was bought and given out, and the hungry people were fed.

After a time, Bhawani Din, who had been receiving grain from the fund, brought money and paid for what had been given to him. We were very much surprised to see a ten-rupee note in his hand, for we knew him to be a poor man. He said, "My son, who is in the army, has sent me some money, so now I can pay for what you have given me." We were much gratified to see that he was not altogether grasping and selfish.

Strange to say, the bamboo did blossom that fall for the first time in our career in India. We do not, however, believe with the Hindus that it was because of the famine. Some say the bamboo blossoms once in fifty years; others, once in fifteen. We do not know whether either of these statements is correct—only that we saw the creamy white blossoms that year.

It was not long after this that poor old Amar finished his earthly career, and sad to say, he had never had courage enough to turn away from his old teachings and from his worthless gods of stone. God grant we may be able to win some of the younger and more pliable generation away from their idols to serve the true God.

The next great time of need came with the sowing season, when the poor people had no seed to sow. At that season the rich men try to make money by giving them seed and making them sign an agreement that in the harvest-time they will return six times as much as they received. Such a man is called a mahajan, maha meaning "great," and jan, "a person." We are doing our best to keep these neighbors and brothers of ours from falling into the hands of these "great persons," and God has helped us to establish a permanent grain fund, from which the poor receive seed for sowing every year, returning to the fund in harvest-time just as much as they received from it.

In one of the large villages nearby a number of these grasping mahajans are living, and we sometimes speak of their neighborhood as the place "where Satan's seat is," for it seems to be

more wicked, and to a greater extent possessed with the spirit of evil, than any other place round about us.

The one grand aim of all our missionary effort is to snatch some of these poor souls from the greatest of all evil ones, who holds them so tightly in his grasp. Thank God, by His power they can be made free indeed. And while we minister to their physical needs and seek to alleviate their suffering, it is our ceaseless prayer that we may be able to lead them into the way of truest freedom, greatest earthly happiness, and never-ending bliss in the home of many mansions.



The Street Sweeper

THE CHAINS OF INCONSISTENCY

"Consistency, thou art a jewel."

INCONSISTENCIES are certain to accompany anything false, and the Hindu religion is no exception to this rule.

The order was given to one of our servants of the farmer caste to draw water from the well and put it into the tubs for rinsing the clothes. "But," said he, "I cannot draw water

for the washing, for I am not a washerman, and my caste would be broken."

"You mean to say you cannot draw clean water from the well and carry it, because it is to be used in washing?"

"That is right, Sahib, I cannot do it."

Accordingly, a man of a lower caste was given this work to do; but we noticed that after the washing was finished, this man of the farmer caste came, with others, and all together they put their clothes into the soapy water in which our clothes had been washed. Each man washed his own clothes and rinsed them in the water that the farmer had refused to carry.

"How does this happen?" we asked the farmer. "You cannot carry clean water from the well because it is to be used for washing; but afterward, when that water has become dirty, you use it for the sake of the soap that is in it."

He was astonished and seemed at a loss to know what to say, but we noticed that neither he nor the other men washed their clothes in our dirty water after that. The lower caste men, however, continue to do so.

One day some of us were going into Allahabad by train, and when we arrived at the

station, one of the missionaries, having come off in a hurry, discovered that he was wearing a pair of old shoes that were not presentable for traveling. He called one of the men and told him to run quickly and bring his other shoes. The man said nothing and after some hesitation started off on his errand. When he returned, we saw at once where the trouble lay. The man belonged to a caste forbidden to touch leather, in case it should be made of the hide of a cow. He had consented to go, because he thought he could carry the shoes by the strings and thus avoid touching the leather, but to his dismay he found that the strings were made of leather also. He had a little more ingenuity than some Indians, however, and solved his problem well. He took a piece of thin rope and tied it through the back straps of the shoes and carried them by that. He appeared with a look of triumph that said as plainly as words, "See, I have brought the shoes and have not broken my caste either."

We could not repress a laugh when we saw what he had done, and he laughed with us. No doubt he had touched the shoes in tying the string to them, but none of his caste brethren had seen him do it, so that did not matter.

We bought the street sweepings from the village of Siwait, to be used as fertilizer, but no one except the sweepers could load it on the cart. The regular driver could drive the oxen, but he could not help with the loading. Then, too, sweepers had to come to our place to do the unloading; but once it was on our premises, the other men could handle it just as they did any other fertilizer.

Cow dung is sacred to the Hindu. It is one of the elements that a man must eat in order to be reinstated if he has broken his caste. The Chamars, who are of very low caste, must never carry cow dung above their heads. If they should do so, their caste would be broken. Accordingly, when they scatter it over the fields for fertilizer, they carry it in small baskets on their shoulders; whereas any other burden, from a hundred pound weight to a lota, or bottle, is carried on the head. They make cow dung into cakes, which they dry in the sun, to use for fuel in cooking their food. They smear it on their floors every morning; at least, if they are careful housekeepers they do. They also smear it over their walls to take the place of whitewash.

Every one is familiar with the proverb about

crying over spilled milk. In India clarified butter—called ghi—is used very extensively in cooking. One day when we were waiting for a train in Allahabad, we saw a man step down from one which had just arrived. He had a tin pail full of ghi, and as the day was warm, it was in liquid form. While he was pushing his way through the crowd, his pail was accidentally upset, and the ghi ran out on the stone platform. The poor man looked almost ready to cry.

What astonished us, however, was to see him begin scooping up the butter with his hands and putting it back into the pail. He seemed to be a high caste man, and we never dreamed that he would use it after it had been on the floor. A crowd gathered round, and he kept shouting to the low caste men not to touch the spot where the ghi was. He scraped up as much as he could, even out of the dirty cracks.

As we looked on, our curiosity finally overcame us, and we determined to find out whether the man really intended using the ghi for cooking. "Look here, friend, men of every other caste have walked here, and these stones are soiled with the dirt from their feet. Will it not break your caste if you use this ghi?"

"Oh, I will first make it clean."

"How can you make it clean?"

"I will strain it through a cloth."

"But how can that take away the defilement?"

He seemed confused and was at a loss to know what to answer, and as we went on our way, we could not help pondering over the inconsistency of it all. If we, or a low caste person, should even touch the outside of the butter, he would never think of using it, but would throw it all away. Yet, after it had been spread over the dirty floor, he gathered it up and thought he could make it clean by simply straining it.

One very hot day a native went some distance away with one of the missionaries to do a piece of work. It was noticeable that the Hindu drank no water, and the missionary asked, "Bhagu, are you not thirsty?"

"Yes, Sahib, my throat is dry, and I am suffering from thirst."

"Then why do you not drink? Are there no men of your caste here who have wells?"

"Yes, Sahib, there is plenty of water, but I have not eaten anything this morning, and I

cannot drink water until I have eaten something. When we finish the work, I will go home and eat, and then I can drink."

One very hot summer the Allahabad water works were out of order. This made it hard for men who worked away from home and could not keep water to drink. Consequently, men of high caste were stationed on many street corners that they might relieve the suffering of the ekka, or carriage, drivers and other passers-by. But each of these men had to provide himself with sweets to sell, because if a man had eaten nothing that day he could not take a drink, regardless of how he might be suffering with thirst. Every man who wanted a drink could get it free by first buying and eating a pice, half a cent, worth of sweets.

The people of the Chamar caste cannot eat beef that has been killed in the proper way and is sold by the butchers, but if an ox or a cow dies of old age or disease, they carry away the carcass and have a royal feast. The Mohammedans customarily eat blue bull, a wild animal somewhat like a deer, but when one of our missionaries shot one and afterward cut its throat to bleed it, the Mohammedans would eat none

of it, because Mohammedan prayers had not been said over it as its throat was cut. We had much more meat than we could eat, so a number of our Chamar friends shared it with us.

How we thank God for a pure, intelligent, and consistent faith to offer to these dark souls bound in the age-old shackles of a heathen religion. Jesus Christ came to proclaim liberty even to these captives. He can swing wide the prison doors and set them absolutely free.



The Bride

NANKI, THE GIRL WIDOW

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish.
—Thomas Moore

SHE WAS only eleven years old, but she was a widow,—and it was her fault that her husband had died. She had never seen him, it was true, but it must be her fault, because her mother-in-law said so. Indeed, it is always a wife's fault if her husband dies. Nanki must have done some very wicked deed, perhaps dur-

ing some former existence; therefore, the gods were angry, and she must be punished.

That was why every one in the women's coach of the train was being disturbed by Nanki's pitiful cries and moans. To be sure, it did no good for her to cry; it did not change the past, or make the future brighter. Still, she could not quiet herself. Her mother was trying to console her, but how could she comfort one whom she knew to be doomed to misery? This daughter, whom she had loved and cared for so tenderly and reared in a life of ease as becomes one of her caste, was henceforth to be a mere servant, a slave as it were, in the house of her mother-in-law. The girl was still dressed in her daintily-tinted clothing, but this must soon give place to the coarse garb of a servant.

In her heart the mother rebelled against the fate of her child and longed to save her from such a life; but if she showed any outward sign of what she felt, she feared the gods might be angry with her also—and perhaps her son, her only son, would die, and then her lot would be no better than that of her daughter.

At length the poor mother gave up trying to comfort the child, and with their heads on

each other's shoulders they wept together, keeping their faces covered with their saris; for ladies of their high caste must not show their faces to the low-class women folk about them.

They had boarded the train at Benares, where the girl had made an offering for her sin —whatever it might be. But why offer a sacrifice for her sin, when there was no hope that she might ever be freed from its penalty? The ban of that unknown crime must always rest upon her until she should stand before Yama—Satan—for judgment.

It was a hot afternoon, and some of the passengers were very much annoyed because, aside from the discomforts of a third-class compartment and the hot wind blowing in at the windows, they must endure the sound of weeping. Some spoke to the women in a coaxing way, reasoning that they would only make themselves ill by their long-continued crying.

One woman called out, "Do you think you can bring the dead man back by your tears and groans?"

Another spoke up sharply, "Have you any right to make every one else miserable because you are miserable yourselves?"

Still another remarked, "You should wait until you get home and then weep."

But the poor little widow and her mother sorrowed as those who have no hope and turned a deaf ear to kindness and sharpness alike. Some of the passengers looked wistfully at the pair as the train stopped at the different stations, hoping each time that they had reached their destination. But no—they did not leave the train during the whole long, hot afternoon, and their weeping continued. Just as the sun was sinking below the horizon, the train stopped at a large village, and a fine-looking Bengali man, who was the girl's only brother, came up from another compartment and helped the women to alight. This change seemed only to bring their grief more vividly before them; for as the train moved on after a short stop, the last glimpse we had of the mourners they were standing together, with their arms around each other, still wailing most piteously.

It is true that our own fair land is full of misery and offers a wide field for missionary work. Our American cities are full of sin and suffering and sorrow. Frequently the cry is raised that there is enough to do at home, with-

out our journeying to foreign fields. Yet—can we turn our backs on such misery as Nanki's and make no effort to lift these people out of their sorrows? Dare we cease stretching forth our hands to help them?

Those at home are within reach of help. The Bible lies unused on many center tables and upon many dusty shelves. The story of Jesus' love and pardoning grace has become so common that it is no longer appreciated. It is trampled carelessly underfoot. Surely we must do all we can to awaken them from their careless, fateful slumbers. We must sound the alarm and keep Christ's loving call ever before them. But, in the meantime, think of those who live an utterly hopeless life and look anxiously into an utterly hopeless future. Shall they not be told that there is hope—that full and free salvation has been bought for them as well as for us?

One compassionate old lady, as she looked at the weeping Nanki, said, with tears in her eyes, "Ah, it would have been better if she had died than that this should have happened to her." Yes, so it seemed to her who had never learned the better way.

Is it right that these poor souls should be

denied the strong consolation Christ died to bring to them? People often raise the objection, "Why trouble ourselves to change their religion? They are satisfied." Ah, are they satisfied? Are these wails and moans, then, the indications of satisfaction?

We were among the passengers in the coach that sultry afternoon and listened to the piteous wailings of little Nanki and her mother. How our hearts ached as the train rolled on, and how we longed to ease the sorrows of these dusky sisters of ours. Christianity alone elevates woman to her rightful place. May we who enjoy its countless blessings live and labor to hold up the Christ who sounds out the loving call—

"Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal."

A VILLAGE GLIMPSE

Along the Jumna's waters green,
A clump of trees afar is seen.
The cows that graze upon the sward,
Eke out a living lean and hard.

By nearer view the huts we see,
Which nestle, each beneath a tree.
Adown the long steep pathway wend
The women, to the river's bend.

With great brass pots upon the head,
This weary path they often tread;
And up the village lane they come,
Ent'ring now the mud-walled home.

We follow, hoping we may trace
The heart-life of this dusky race.
What hope have they? what dark despair?
What consolation and what care?

But oh! what horror meets our eye,
And from our hearts escapes a cry.
Red-horned, red-eyed, with horrid glare,
We see an idol standing there.

His angry eyes and grinding teeth,
His horrid frown and grin beneath;
His hateful look of fearful glee,—
The terror of all terrors, he.

Thus, part of stone, of wood a part,
The image that was in their heart
They formed, and fear it as they should
If God had hewed the stone and wood.

Behold a man who bears a cup;
He bows his head and then looks up.
He pours the sacred water there,
To rid his soul of sin and fear.

Oh, what a picture dark and sad!
And can we still be gay and glad,
And rest at ease, nor strive to save
These lost ones from a Christless grave?

Must we not tell them—God is grace,
And not a stone with fiendish face?
If we this gracious secret keep,
The wrath of Heaven we must reap.



The "Ekka"

A WORSHIP OF FRAUDS

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. —Bible

AFTER we had moved into the district where our mission is now situated, we went to a small village one day to hold a meeting. During the service a young sheep was capering about, petted and fondled by those who sat near. It was plump and pretty, quite different from the ordinary village animals, which are, as a rule, dreadfully underfed. After the meeting we asked some one whose it was and were told that it belonged to Gaji Miya. At first we thought that was some person living in the

village, but we soon learned that the little animal had been consecrated to be offered at the shrine of Gaji Miya and was being fattened for the great yearly festival.

We had not heard of this shrine before and upon inquiry learned that it is the tomb of a Mohammedan who is supposed to have been very virtuous. Although the Hindus have thousands of deities of their own, still their unsatisfied hearts crave something more, and they must needs make their offerings at the tomb of a Mohammedan.

The religion of the Hindus will not allow them to kill, and living creatures are never sacrificed in the worship of their deities. However, when they worship at this shrine, they must offer flesh, because the Mohammedans do not share the Hindu vegetarian diet.

Elsewhere I have mentioned a Mohammedan servant of ours who became very sick about this time. As he was his aged father's eldest son, the old man was greatly concerned, and the two held a consultation together. They decided to buy two fine big cocks to be consecrated to Gaji Miya and offered to him at the next annual festival.

We learned that many of the most sensible Hindus in the neighborhood, who otherwise would not think of touching fowls, would buy them to offer at the shrine of Gaji Miya. We were especially surprised to hear Bhagwan Din, a man of common sense and of rather high caste, bargaining for a cock to be offered at this shrine. We wondered what great attraction could induce men to walk a distance of twelve miles or more to make an offering there, and we determined to go and see for ourselves.

Having engaged an ekka the night before, very early one morning we walked to Siwait, a distance of half a mile or more from our house; and, looking doubtfully at our vehicle and harness, clambered up and were ready to start. The driver informed us that we would have to go through a pond, but we thought nothing of that; for it is not at all uncommon during the rainy season to have to cross stretches of water on the poorer roads. However, when we had reached the deepest part of the pond, one of the tugs of the rickety harness broke; and, as our vehicle had only two wheels, we narrowly escaped being thrown backward into the muddy water. The driver caught the shaft and held it

down until his son brought a very flimsy-looking rope with which to replace the broken tug. When this had been tied up, we proceeded on our way, the driver and his son pushing on the wheels while the poor little horse pulled. We were thankful to get out of the pond safe and sound.

When we saw a very rough place in the road ahead, we would jump down and walk over it to avoid the jolting. We were glad indeed when we reached the government road, where we could spin along at quite a good pace; and except that the harness broke and had to be tied up four times during the trip, we fared very well. Along the way we passed many little groups of people, all of whom, we were told by the driver, were on their way to Gaji Miya's shrine. We reached our destination in time to see the festival at its height. This was not the great annual festival, but one held weekly at the Mohammedan's tomb.

We had been told by the simple villagers that a certain door in the shrine opened miraculously on the great day. We were curious to see the door and to find out how the people were so successfully deceived. We found it to be a very ordinary-looking door, about four feet high and

perhaps two feet wide, made of thick planks. Some temple doors or gates are highly ornamented, but this one was perfectly plain—it was not even painted. It was standing open, but a heavy padlock hung on the rings. One man who was standing by declared that this door does actually open of its own accord once a year.

Afterward we asked the driver to tell us the truth about the wonderful door. He knew that we would not believe any nonsense, so he told us frankly that he had often unlocked the door himself for the supposed miraculous self-opening; for he was one of the sixteen men who shared the profits of this shrine. He said the Hindus believed it opened miraculously because they had been told so.

We were curious to see what was behind this marvelous door, and our guide cleared away the crowd so that we could see. The door opened into a small, square, temple-like structure, inside of which was a grave that was cemented over. On each side of the grave sat a man, one receiving offerings of flowers, cloth, or money from the people, and the other giving each worshiper a few sweets in a green leaf. These sweets, we learned, were thought to have been blessed

by Gaji Miya and if eaten by the children of the worshipers were supposed to bring a special blessing upon them, as well as to prevent sickness and other evils.

Outside there were three other graves quite similar to the one inside, and at each of these some one sat to receive the offerings of the people. At one of the graves only sheep, goats and fowls—from tiny week-old chickens to full-grown birds—were offered. At another tomb only flowers, cloth, grain, fruit, gold, silver, or copper coins were accepted. It was terrible to see the greediness of those who received the offerings, as they clawed about among the flowers in the hope of finding a few pice.

Mohammedans were there with fowls to sell, in case any of the worshipers had come without their offerings, and they found a ready sale for them. Some had tiny chickens that were not yet old enough to have feathers. If a worshiper wished to offer a live chicken, he paid one anna for the privilege of taking one of those tiny things in his hand and dropping it on the tomb; but if he wished to have it killed, he must pay four annas. The same rule held good with the larger fowls, except that the price was higher.

The birds that were not killed were sold again. Thus the same fowl may be offered week after week by different worshipers, from the time it is a tiny chick until it is full-grown. If a worshiper happens to be of high caste, he buys the fowl and has it killed and offered; and then, since he cannot eat it, the Mohammedan who sold it to him takes it home for his own dinner, thus bagging the bird as well as the price of it.

We saw two men apparently more economical than the rest, for they shared the cost of one cock and paid a Mohammedan one anna for killing it for them. After it had been offered, they carried it away to eat it, for they were men of low caste and so were allowed to eat flesh. They would not have been allowed to kill the fowl, but since it had been killed as an offering, there was no rule against their eating it.

Going around to the back of the temple, we saw some very old tamarind trees. Many of the top branches had fallen off, having rotted with age, but the trees could not be cut down, because they were sacred. One of the trunks was at least six feet in diameter and must have been five hundred years old. We stood under the

shade of this old tree as we watched the worshipers going through their ceremonies.

A number of men and women who were striving to become endued with the spirit of the dead Gaji Miya stood at the back wall of the temple. Facing the wall, they stood in such a way that their toes, noses, foreheads, and the palms of their hands touched it. We asked some of the bystanders why they were doing this and were told that they were confessing their sins. After standing in this position for some time, they all knelt around one of the outside tombs, with their hands clasped and their foreheads touching the edge of the tomb. We asked what this meant, and the answer was that they were still confessing their sins. It made us heartsick to see how they ignored the great God of heaven, who alone can forgive sins, and how they prayed to this dead man whose bones had gone through that inevitable process—"ashes to ashes, dust to dust"— hundreds of years ago.

And now began a scene that was awful to behold. These men and women who had been confessing their sins arose and stood, some near the walls of the enclosure, and some in a circle around the tomb where they had been kneeling.

They began to jump and groan and throw themselves about, going through all sorts of weird contortions, trying in this way to induce the spirit of Gaji Miya to come upon them. Faster and faster they jumped and beat their breasts and threw their arms about, while a Mohammedan musician played a rude sort of tambourine for each worshiper. The excitement of this music seemed to work them up into a frenzy, and the faster the musician played, the more excited they became. Perspiration was rolling from their almost naked bodies, and some of the women pulled their hair until it stood out straight in all directions, giving them a most hideous appearance.

Now the people who had requests to make began to gather about, for when the excitement becomes great enough and the worshipers become endued, as they suppose, with the spirit of the dead man, they can tell inquirers anything they wish to know. They even take it upon themselves to forgive sins in the name of Gaji Miya. One man had about eight people gathered about him, calling out the questions they wished to have answered and the requests they had to make. How they pleaded, and how

anxious were their faces! Nothing could distract their attention—it was evident that they were in dead earnest.

Surely a scene like this proves the folly of the theory that any religion is all right, so long as a person is earnest and sincere. Could the dead Gaji Miya forgive sins because a worshiper was desperately in earnest about the matter? No, and enlightened and criminally selfish people cannot shift their responsibility by arguing that the Hindu religion is good enough for the Hindu. The Lord will not hold us guiltless if we take our ease while these poor souls are being deceived and lost.

One man made his request of the spirit worshiper, who, instead of giving him an answer, gave him a blow on the chest which sent him several steps backward. The man was too much in earnest to mind the blow, however, and continued to shout his entreaty into the worshiper's ear.

A woman stood with clasped hands and tears streaming down her face as she pleaded her cause. The spirit worshiper repelled her, but she would not give up and go away. She kept touching his arm and pleading with him.

Some received answers to their questions and went away convinced that Gaji Miya himself had answered them. Some were told that they must bring a cock or money or flowers at the time of the next festival to atone for their sin. Some were told that their sins were forgiven, and they went away to commit the same sins again.

We watched one woman who seemed to find it hard to become endued with the dead man's spirit. We wondered whether it was not because we were standing behind her. Two musicians played for her so long and so furiously that they were dripping with perspiration. One of them finally became impatient and shouted at the woman, "If you don't hurry up and get the spirit on you, I will give you a beating." She was so intent that she did not appear to hear him. Another woman sat by with a sad and anxious face, for she had some sort of trouble in her home and was waiting for this woman to tell her the cause and the cure.

After much more playing on the part of the musicians and much more striving on the part of the woman, she seemed at last to reach the desired pitch. She told the woman what sin had

caused her trouble and how she might atone for it. Finally the seeker handed the spirit worshiper a piece of straw about eight inches long. This the worshiper took and broke into three pieces, as a sign that Gaji Miya had broken off the woman's sins, even as that straw had been broken up. The woman went away looking quite pleased, as though she really believed her sin was forgiven.

Afterward we spoke to some Mohammedan women whose husbands had a share in the profits of the tombs. "Do you believe in everything that goes on at Gaji Miya's shrine?" we asked.

"Oh, yes," they answered, "of course, we do. Why shouldn't we believe in it, when our living comes from there?"

"But truly, in your hearts, you do not believe there is any power there." To this they made no answer. We had not expected them to answer our first question quite so frankly.

A little later, one of their men came in with a fine cock that had been offered by some high-class Hindu who could not eat it himself. No doubt, they had a fine curry out of it.

Strange to say, the Hindus cannot see that the Mohammedans alone are profiting by this

scheme. The sixteen men who own the land where the tombs stand are all Mohammedans and share all the offerings among themselves. The paid musicians are all Mohammedans. It is the Hindus who do all the giving and work themselves into a frenzy to become endued with the spirit of the dead Mohammedan.

Of the man who drove our ekka we asked the question, "Is it not against the teaching of your Koran (the Mohammedan's holy book) to have anything to do with such a worship as this?"

"Yes, it is," he replied frankly, "but for the sake of our stomachs we do it."

His religion meant far less to him than worldly gains. The Koran speaks very plainly against idolatry of any kind, but since it offers to its readers no Savior, no deliverance from the power of sin, how can they be expected to obey its mandates?



The Potter

A HOLE IN THE WALL

When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. —Achan

BEFORE the English government made a desperate attempt to make India a safe country in which to live and travel, natives, as well as foreigners, were continually in danger on account of the bandits who infested the country.

Even now it is dangerous for Indians to travel any great distance by road if they have anything of value in their possession. We were

talking once with an ekka driver whose horse had died. He wished to go to an annual fair some distance away to buy a new horse, because animals were sold at a much cheaper rate there than in our neighborhood. We were somewhat surprised when we learned that he was trying to get others interested in buying horses also.

"But why do you wish to have us buy a horse?" we asked.

"You see, sahib, if as many as three horses are bought, the railway will give a free ticket for a man to go with them, and all will arrive home safely."

"But why not buy your horse and ride it home by road? That would be much cheaper."

"Yes, it would be cheaper if I could be sure of getting home, but there are robbers lurking about these fairs, and when a man starts off alone with the animals he has bought, they follow him, pretending to be travelers like himself. In the night they beat him with big sticks until he cannot fight, and then they take his horses and run away with them."

Robbers in this country have very little use for skeleton keys or safe-breaking implements, for the natives, as a rule, do not put their trea-

sures into safes, but into holes dug in the ground under their houses. No doubt, it was in accordance with some such custom as this that Achan hid his stolen treasures under the floor of his tent.

It is very common to hear of robbers making a hole in the roof of a house and carrying off a box of jewelry or as many rupees as they can find. Or, perchance one of our neighbors awakes in the morning to find that a hole has been cut in the wall of his house and all his grain has been carried away.

We had not been long in our Siwait home, when we were told one morning that a hole had been dug in the wall of Lachman's house, and two bags of rice were gone. This was the whole of Lachman's rice crop for a year, so it was a great loss to him. We went over to Badalpur to see this hole in the wall, for although we had often heard of such things happening, we had never gone to see for ourselves. There, perhaps a foot from the ground, was a hole about eighteen inches in diameter which had been dug straight through the hard wall of dried earth. A girl about eighteen years of age had been sleeping in the room, but the digging had not

wakened her, which shows how very stealthily they carry on their operations.

One night a hole was dug in the wall of Bhagu's house, and all his brass dishes were stolen. Thieves are very fond of stealing brass dishes, for it is almost impossible to catch them at this trick. They are usually in partnership with some jeweler who has a small furnace and makes brass ornaments. The brass is stolen in the night, and before morning it has been melted down so it cannot be recognized by the owner.

The robbers that give us the most trouble of all are the village dogs. If we do not care to have them walking over our tables, we must close the dining room doors and windows so they cannot come in. If the pantry is not securely fastened, they are liable to tear the wire from the cupboards, break the dishes, and do all sorts of damage. We have shot a number of these troublesome creatures, but always it seems there are just as many as there were before.

Far away in a certain hill district there is a tribe of people who eat dogs. During the War some of these men were brought down to serve in the labor corps. We were told by a friend who lived near a railway station through which they

passed, that when the train stopped the men jumped out and caught all the curs they could find about the station, cut their throats, drank the blood, and kept the flesh to be cooked when they might have opportunity. We have sometimes remarked that it would be a relief to us if some of these tribesmen should pass through our part of the country and clear out the dogs.

The doors and windows of our living rooms are never closed for the purpose of keeping out thieves. During the warm weather we sleep in the yard, often far away from the house, but the doors are never closed. We are often asked by our city friends, "Are you not afraid to live out in that jangli (wild) place?"

"What should we fear?"

"Why, you could not call for any one to help you or escape to any place of safety, if anything should happen."

"But we are under God's protecting care, and, too, we feel far safer out there among our friends, the villagers, than we should in the heart of the city."

There is a certain Hindu festival which requires the making of a bonfire, and it is considered allowable to secure the wood from any

place and in any way possible. We had put a few small timbers in a culvert in the road leading from our place to the station. When this festival season came, our timbers were missing, and no doubt some one's fire was the brighter for them.

The women who cut grass for their cattle find it convenient to hide in their grass baskets small things which they find and consider useful. They used to come often to cut grass in our garden, for it grew rankly along the edges of the irrigation ditches. At first we willingly allowed them to do this, but we found so many carrots, sweet potatoes, and other vegetables hidden away in their baskets, that we had to forbid their coming into the garden.

The religion of these people does not teach them that it is wrong to steal, and with so many generations of false teaching back of them, it is not strange that they do not heed the voice of conscience. This serious weakness in morals only stirs us up to pray and strive more earnestly than ever to teach them the way of salvation. When they have the law of the Lord written in their hearts, they will no longer wish to steal wood to burn bonfires to worthless idols.



The Bed of Nails

EAGER SEARCHERS

The way of peace have they not known. —Bible

BEFORE our personal acquaintance with the people of this land, we often wondered whether the many tales afloat regarding the tortures they endured in the quest for peace were actually true. Our question is answered—they are quite true. These poor souls know not what they are seeking, but they are conscious of a terrible hunger. They travel hither and yon, hoping that by visiting certain places and performing certain ceremonies or by subjecting themselves to torture they will appease the hun-

ger and quench the thirst—that of the soul.

We had been in the country only a short time, when a man came into our yard one day with his right hand held high above his head. And such an arm! There was no flesh on it—it was like the arm of a skeleton. He had held it in that position for a period of twelve years, and the joints had stiffened so that he would never be able to move it back to its proper place. These people are told that if they will torture themselves in this way for twelve years, the gods will be pleased to look upon them with favor and they will obtain peace of heart. When the twelve years are at an end, they awake to the fact that all they have obtained by this self-torture is a stiffened, useless, and deadened limb. We shall never forget the hopeless look on this poor man's face.

At one time we lived just across the gali (alley) from an old Hindu who arose very early every morning to call upon his god. He was in need of help and believed Ram could bestow it if only he could make him hear, so he called out again and again, "*Ram, Ram, jag, Ram, jag, Ram,*" which means, "Ram, Ram, wake up, Ram, wake up, Ram."

How this plaintive cry touched our hearts! For Ram himself was but a man who lived many hundreds of years ago, and who himself knew nothing of what it means to obtain peace of soul.

The first time we attended the great yearly magh mela (Hindu festival), the dense crowd of people, struggling to step into the Ganges during an eclipse of the sun, presented an awful spectacle to us. The priests and Brahmans had told them there would be great merit in bathing at this time, so at any cost it must be done. One poor woman could not make her way out of the water because of the density of the throng, and she met her death there. Another was crushed to death by the crowd that was struggling to pass over the bridge. This bridge is at least twenty-five feet in width, and yet it was too narrow to accommodate the vast crowds that were pouring from the country to bathe in the Ganges that morning.

It would have been most unfortunate to step into the water from the other side of the river, for that side was cursed many years ago by the god Siva. It is better not to bathe at all than to bathe there—although we have no doubt the

water is much cleaner on that side of the river.

We stood on the broad wall of the fort which is situated on the river bank, and from there we could see all that was going on and yet be apart from the crowd. It makes our hearts sick to see those poor people eagerly seeking for something which we knew they could never obtain in that way. But how shall they know if there is no one to tell them?

One day as we were traveling among the hills along a lovely mountain road, we suddenly forgot the beauty of the scene as we looked down into the stream below and saw a dead body floating on its surface. Upon inquiry we learned that the man was a pilgrim on his return journey from Badrinath, a temple at the source of the Ganges supposed to be most sacred. Those who visit this place are thought to be wonderfully blessed of the gods, and especially by Siva, through whose hair the water of the river is supposed to flow down to earth. This man had failed in his attempt to reach home after the strenuous journey, which involves terrible suffering to people accustomed only to the heat of the plains, for Badrinath is far up among the hills where snow and ice are not uncommon.

We camped that night near an enclosure where hundreds of pilgrims from Badrinath were stopping. They had come up to the holy place as eager seekers, but as we scanned their faces we saw nothing but disappointment and despair.

At one time we were making our way home from Almora, a place in the hills about thirty-seven miles from the nearest railway station. We were traveling this distance by foot and camped for the night near a beautiful mountain lake. We arose very early to finish our walk before the sun should become hot. As we walked along the lakeside about four o'clock in the morning, the stars were shining brightly, and a small comet added to the beauty of the already glorious firmament.

We walked rapidly and soon overtook a party of pilgrims who were also on their way to the railway station, now about eight miles distant. One of our party opened a conversation with a man who seemed to be of the more intelligent type. He said he had been advised by his guru (teacher) to make a pilgrimage to Badrinath, but declared that he had received no benefit from the journey. What impressed him most

was the fact that he had been cheated by the moneychangers, and the priests had enriched themselves with his money. He had not actually suffered, for he had prepared himself with plenty of money and warm clothing; nevertheless, he was going home a sadly disappointed man.

We have seen men subjecting themselves to terrible tortures, such as sitting or lying on beds of nails or long, sharp thorns. To be sure, some do this merely to excite the pity of passers-by in the hope of obtaining money from them; the honest motive of others is to obtain spiritual benefit. We have seen others measuring their length along the hot, dusty roads. They lie down, stretching out their hands as far ahead as possible and making a mark with their fingertips. Then they draw the body along until they can place their toes on the mark made by their fingers—and measure another length.

Two of our missionaries saw a man who wore a wooden girdle around his waist for eighteen years, and it had actually cut into his flesh. He had thought that by thus torturing himself he could obtain peace of soul, but after all those years he found himself as far from his goal as he had been at the beginning.

One day when traveling in a crowded train, we saw a man wasted with disease. We learned that he was going to Benares, the sacred city, that he might die there. The Hindu believes that if he dies in Benares, his soul will find a better incarnation in the next birth than it has had in the present life. But he must be certain to die on the north bank of the river, for if he should die on the south bank, he would surely be born a donkey. This poor man had never found peace in this life and was vainly striving to prepare himself to find it in the next.

We have almost never crossed the Ganges or Narbada rivers without seeing people throwing their money into the sacred streams. The Narbada is said to have its source in the perspiration of the god Siva, and what could be more sacred than that? The rich throw in their rupees, and the poor their pice, and "Mother Ganga," as the Ganges is called, is thought to send a blessing upon them all. How sorely that money is needed by the poor, starving, and naked people.

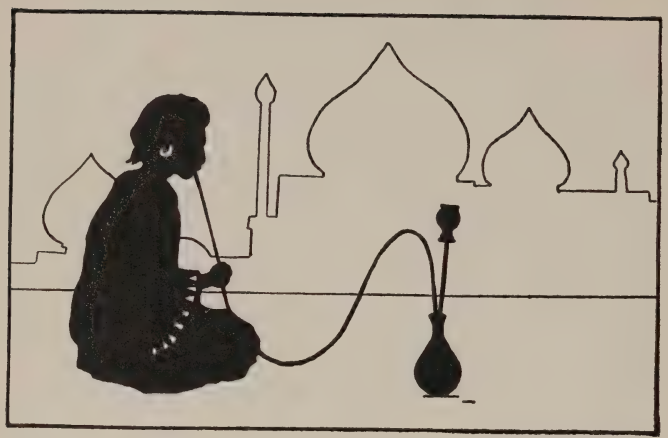
Whenever a Hindu catches a glimpse of the Ganges, he worships. When the train nears its banks, all good Hindus bow their heads and make a profound salaam. One day sorrow and amuse-

ment strove within us as we watched a woman with her little child who was not more than two and a half years old. When the train drew near to the Ganges, the woman first bowed to the river herself and then bobbed the child's head forward with her hand. She hoped that the baby might be benefited by performing this act of which it really understood nothing.

One day while we were traveling to Allahabad, we saw a man on the train who showed by his appearance that he was a pilgrim and a strict Hindu. At that time of the year the Ganges was a very small and insignificant stream. Evidently this man had never seen the sacred river before, but he must have heard wonderful tales about it, for he could not believe that this was the Ganges. Other passengers assured him that it was indeed the holy river, but he protested, "It must be further on." Probably he had come from a long distance and was sadly disappointed to find this little stream the object of his heart's desire.

We are acquainted with an elderly lady who lives about one hundred and fifty miles from our place. Her son works in this vicinity, and the aged mother visits him at least twice a year

so that she can be near enough to the Ganges to bathe in its sacred waters. How many so-called Christians would put forth an equal amount of effort to obtain spiritual blessing? Then do not say that the aged Hindu woman is not an earnest seeker after something to fill the aching void. She is on the wrong road, to be sure, but she is an eager searcher after peace.



Smoking "Huqqa"

HEATHEN TAINTS STILL CLINGING

Nor bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.
Jesus, Thy blood, Thy blood alone,
Hath power sufficient to atone.

—Isaac Watts

IT IS not only the heathen of this land who live in the darkness and superstition of sin. Indians who name the name of Christ stand in great need of having the gospel preached to them and lived before them. Those who have been born of so-called Christian parents still

cling to many of the old ideas and customs of heathenism. This is due to wrong and careless teaching on the part of missionaries. These people have never been taught that they can and must experience a radical change of heart, in which all inclination toward the old heathenish practices will be utterly rooted out.

A so-called Christian family was in the habit of attending our services regularly. One Sunday evening they were absent, and when we saw them the next day we inquired as to the cause. They replied, "We started for the meeting as usual, but on our way we saw two crows fighting in the middle of the road, so we had to turn back."

Puzzled at this explanation, we asked, "But what had that to do with your coming to meeting?"

"Oh," they said, "do you not know that it brings very bad luck to pass fighting crows?"

The really bad "luck," if such it could be called, consisted in the fact that they did not pass the fighting crows and go on their way to the meeting where the gospel was preached.

An Indian Christian family came to live in our compound, and the mother was a very su-

perstitious person. The children had all enjoyed good health for two or three months after their arrival, but when the unhealthful season advanced, some of them fell ill, and the mother declared this was due to the fact that the place was haunted. Hindus commonly believe that certain trees, houses, and localities are peopled with evil spirits who always seek to do them harm. So it is not strange that the poor, untaught woman, who knew nothing of the power of the gospel, should be tormented with such fancies.

These people came to us from a distance and before their arrival wrote to inquire as to whether they should bring ordinary fowls such a distance, and we advised them not to do so. When they arrived, however, we noticed they had brought one cock, and the man explained that it was such a pretty bird they did not like to part with it. We thought no more about it, but afterward the woman confided to one of the Christian girls that this cock had been consecrated to some god when one of the children was sick. We guessed at once that this was the real reason why the cock was so carefully kept. We realized more forcibly than ever the necessity of teaching these Indian "Christians"

that Christ came to rid them forever of all these clinging taints of heathenism. This woman had been a worker in some nominally Christian mission, but how could such a one lead Hindu women into the light of the gospel?

One morning an Indian professing to be a Christian woman indignantly declared that she must have a new water jar.

"But what is wrong with this jar?" we asked. "It is not old, and it does not leak."

"No, but the mehtarani (a low caste woman) touched it by accident, and we cannot use it now."

"But you are a Christian. You do not hold to the rules of caste. What harm did the mehtarani do in touching the jar, so long as it is clean? Besides, you use the water in this jar for nothing but washing."

"Oh, but it is our custom not to use an earthen vessel after a sweeper caste person has touched it," said the woman decidedly, "so we must have a new jar."

One of our native girls was visited by her mother, who professes to be a Christian. The mehtarani made a savory dish of vegetables one evening and offered a portion to the girl, who

ate it with a relish. The mother was greatly shocked and concluded that her daughter had become a sadly degraded person.

An evil that has been handed down to many, many nominal Christians by their heathen ancestors is the huqqa. This is a pipe in which a mixture of tobacco and native sugar is smoked. There is a vessel filled with water through which the smoke is drawn, making a bubbling sound very much like that produced when a child blows through a straw into a cup of water. For this reason the pipe is sometimes called a hubble-bubble.

We once saw a picture of a company of Indian preachers belonging to the Church of England, and what should be in their midst but a large huqqa! Certainly these ignorant men are not to be blamed for clinging to this filthy habit, when it is remembered that their European teachers and ministers are hardly out of the pulpit before their cigars are lighted. Can the disciple be expected to rise above his master?

When we landed in Bombay many years ago, we went into a native shop to buy sun hats. The shopkeeper's mouth presented a most filthy spectacle. A thick red juice covered his teeth

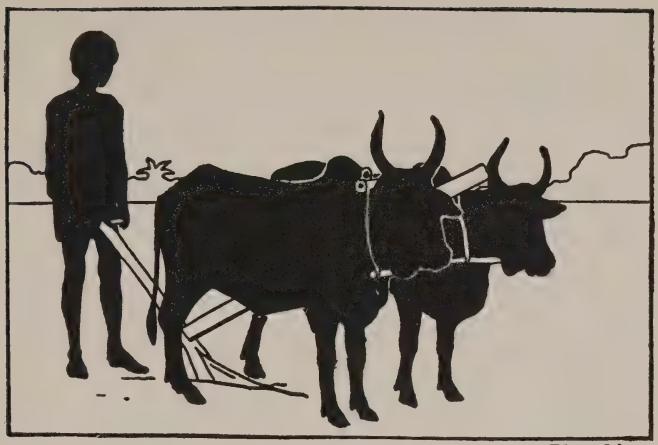
and ran down his beard. It looked like blood, but some one told us it was pan, a green leaf in which a little betel nut, a little lime, and often tobacco are rolled up. This roll is chewed with great relish by men and women. The shopkeeper was a Mohammedan, and this heathen practice seemed quite in keeping with his religion and character. We were not prepared, however, to see professed Christian men and women chewing this filthy mixture.

There is a saying that when vice is often seen, familiar grows its face; but this is not true of the pan habit, especially practiced by so-called Christians. The more we see of it, the more disgusting and revolting it becomes.

We were once shocked and saddened beyond words to see a company of native professed Christian women on their way to a certain district where they were to teach the women living in seclusion. The mouth of every one of these "Christian" missionaries was filthy with pan juice. How can the pure words of Jesus Christ proceed from such lips and be attended with the grace and power of the Spirit? Has Christ chosen such messengers as these to carry His gospel to those who sit in darkness? Nay, verily,

His message must be carried by those who have pure hearts, clean hands, and clean lips.

There are many other taints of heathenism that cling to the nominal Christian, but thank God, our Savior has full power to rid him of them all. The deepest, age-long sin taints disappear at the touch of the cleansing blood. The flesh of the leper becomes again as the flesh of a little child. Regardless of time or place or circumstance, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.



Ploughing

OUTCASTES PRO TEMPORE

Ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.
—Bible

WE WERE camping once near a large village, for the purpose of holding meetings every evening, and during the daytime we often went into the village to speak to the women. We were talking one day with a woman who was shelling peas, when suddenly, from a little distance, we heard a weird cry. At once the woman was all attention, and picking up a double handful of peas, she

ran in the direction from which the cry had come. There, a short distance from the houses, a man was sitting under a tree. She threw the peas on a cloth he had spread out and came running back to us.

We asked her what these strange proceedings meant, and she willingly explained. The man had unwittingly allowed his ox to die while it was tied up with a rope. Therefore he had been ordered by the Brahmans to beg for his living for six months, after which he would be taken back into caste. He was forbidden to stay near his own home; he must travel on foot from village to village, calling out from a distance to let the people know he was there, so they could bring him food just as this woman had done. He must not approach any house, but was required to spend his nights under the trees, outside of some village.

When the unfortunate man had finished his six months' pilgrimage, he would have to return to his home and furnish money for a feast for the Brahmans. He would also be required to eat a mixture of the milk, butter, dung, and urine of the cow, that he might be purified and reinstated into caste.

The six months' wandering from village to village in a case of this kind often involves great privation for the man's family, for while the man of the house is absent his fields are neglected, and there is no one to care whether or not his wife and children are fed.

All this trouble would have been avoided if the man had noticed that his ox was sick and had untied it before its death. The soul of the ox is supposed to have dwelt in a human being during some former existence, and therefore it should be free and unfettered at the time of its departure. If, however, the ox is tied at the time of its death, the spirit is fettered and unable to move about at will. Thus it is seriously hindered in accomplishing the next of its eight thousand births.

TAMASHA DIN was a Kunbi, a farmer, who could not make a living for his family on his small piece of land, so he left the field work for the women of his household and went to Allahabad in search of work. When he came to us, we told him we wished to have a fan pulled for a few hours every day, but that was not enough work for a man, and we agreed to hire him if he would do other work as well. He was quite will-

ing, and all went well for awhile. We believed we had secured quite a satisfactory servant, and he seemed happy; in fact, he was rather jolly for an Indian, and we remarked that his name fitted him well—for Tamasha means "play" or "fun."

After some months his caste brethren learned in some way that he turned our washing machine every week. This, of course, was forbidden ground for a Kunbi, so they held a committee meeting, and fined him fifteen rupees for his crime. He continued to work for us, but did not dare to turn the washing machine anymore. He told us he would be glad to do it, as far as he himself was concerned, and that if his caste brethren had not found out about it, all would have been well.

AN OLD pariah dog with a family of puppies attached herself to our establishment in Siwait. The dog did not prove to be an asset, and we asked Parshad one day if there was any way we might rid ourselves of this annoyance. He knew a man who would, he thought, be willing to take the dog, and he was sure he could, at any rate, dispose of the puppies. He carried the little animals and led the old dog by a chain.

Parshad returned quite elated, saying he had disposed of them all. A few days later, however, he came back with a very rueful face. He said the Brahmans were going to fine him two rupees eight annas for leading a dog by a chain. They told him it would have been all right if he had coaxed her along, but to lead her by a chain was a terrible breach of caste etiquette and could never be allowed.

Thus the Brahmans oppress the poorer and more ignorant class of people, watching for every possible chance to exact money from them. They reap the benefits, using the fraudulent gains exacted from such poor men as Parshad to prepare rich feasts for themselves. Only the gospel can proclaim liberty to such captives as these and set the prisoners free.



Making "Gur"—Molasses

NOVEL INDIAN REMEDIES

No matter what the sickness dread,
No matter what the aching,
No matter if the throbbing head
Be near the point of breaking,
No matter if 'twixt cause and cure
There be no slight connection,
Behold a healing swift and sure
By regal Mind's election!

—Mind Over Matter

A BOY who attends our Sunday School came to our house one day and stood about with a wistful look on his face. We knew he had some sort of request to make, so we asked, "What is it, Bikwa? What do you want?"

"Miss Sahib, please give me a cabbage from your garden," said the lad.

"And what will you do with a cabbage?"

"I have a very bad cold, and if I eat cabbage, it will get better."

We laughed at him and told him that cabbage could not cure a cold. "Oh, yes, Miss Sahib," he insisted, "cabbage is very good for a cold." We gave him the cabbage, and he went away happy.

We were varnishing some furniture one day, when Bhaktini came to see us. She was all interest at once. She looked at the table that was beginning to shine under its new coat, touched it, and smelled of it.

"What kind of oil is this?" she asked.

"We do not know any Hindustani name for this oil."

"It must be very good oil; will you not give me some of it?"

"What do you want to do with it, Bhaktini?"

"I will rub it on my legs to take away the rheumatism," she replied. We assured her that that would never do, and she seemed much disappointed that we did not grant her wish.

How many requests we have for tea—"Just a little," they plead. This is used to cure fever, and they declare that it works. They have their own way of cooking it, and an original method it is. They put the tea and some gur, a very dirty, unrefined sugar, into a lota or some other cooking utensil and boil it well. You may be able to imagine the result.

Even people of the high castes come to us to ask for tea. At first we used to say to these well-to-do people, "Why do you not go and buy tea for yourselves?"

"Oh," they replied, "the tea that is sold here in the villages is not good. The servants of the Europeans gather up the tea leaves after their masters have had their tea and dry them and sell them again. That is the tea that is sold here. There is no strength in it, and how can we drink it?"

Whether or not this is really practised, we

cannot say, but it is certainly a fact that there is no strength in the village tea.

Our washing is a never-failing source of interest to our neighbors. They sometimes stand for a long while watching us while we wash and iron. They think we are very foolish because we wash our clothes, when, as they say, "They are not dirty." Their clothes are not ready for the wash until they are almost the color of the ground.

One day a man was watching the process, and when he saw us putting bluing into the rinse water he said, "Please give me some of that bluing."

"Why do you want it?" we asked. "You are not a washerman."

"I want to dissolve it in water and rub it on my chest," he answered. "It will take away this soreness." We have had a number of requests for bluing for the chest, and the people seem to believe it really helps them.

Our sweeper's wife was going about with a piece of cork in the lobe of her ear, which had been pierced, and the hole stretched until the cork of an ordinary vinegar bottle could easily be placed within.

"Mehtarani," we said, "why do you keep that piece of cork in your ear?"

"Oh, that is for my headache."

"Headache! How can that cork, placed in your ear, help your headache?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Sahib! I used to have very bad headaches, until a man told me that if I would put a piece of cork in my ear it would help me; and now my headaches are not nearly so bad."

One day Badesi came to us, looking as if he were really in pain.

"What is the matter, Badesi?" we asked.

"Oh, my head is aching so, it feels as if it should burst. Please give me a few cloves, a little cinnamon, and a few pepper corns."

"What will you do with them? Will you make tea of them?"

"Oh, no," he answered, "I will grind them very fine and mix in a little water. Then I will plaster it on my forehead, and my headache will go away." There does seem to be a little sense in this remedy, as the heat of these strong spices might tend to draw out the pain.

Little Kaddu had heat stroke. For days he had had a high fever and terrible pains in his

head. His father and mother were very anxious and were trying all sorts of remedies.

One day the old grandfather appeared on the scene and began to give orders as to what should be done. It was the season for green mangoes, and he said that some barley should be ground into fine flour and mixed into a paste with the juice of green mangoes. This paste was to be plastered on the boy's body from head to foot; also mango juice was to be given him to drink. What a queer sight Kaddu was, plastered all over in this way! But, strange to say, when it had dried and was scraped off, the fever was gone; and he was soon able to walk about again.

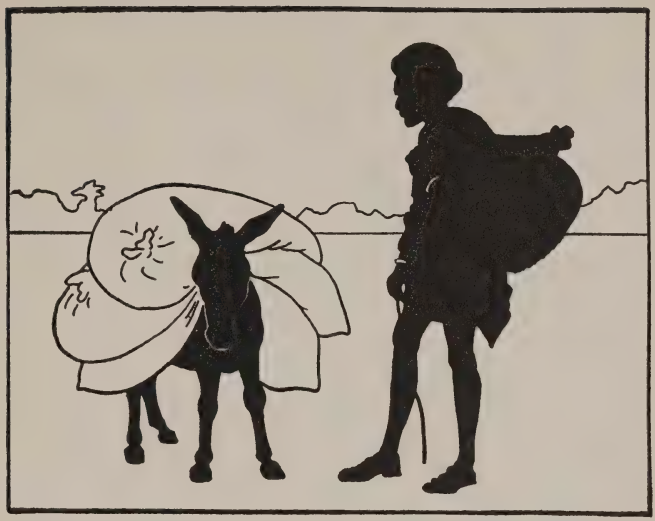
We once had a man of the Kachi or gardener caste taking care of our garden. One day while he was doing some weeding, his finger was stung by a scorpion.

We were sorry indeed that this had happened to him while he was doing our work and wished very much to do something for him. However, he refused every offer, saying, "Only give me leave of absence, and I will go to a man I know. He will put some medicine in my ear."

"Medicine in your ear! But what good can that do to your finger?"

"Oh, yes, that is the proper thing to do."

We knew nothing would be gained by arguing with him, so we gave him permission to go. Strange to say, he returned declaring that the pain had left his finger the moment the medicine was put in his ear.



The "Dhobi"—Washerman

VOICES OF THE NIGHT

When shall I arise, and the night be gone?—Job

THE Indian night is alive. We speak of the silent hours of the night, but seldom is there a really silent hour in India. True, we have become so accustomed to most of these sounds that we can sleep through them undisturbed, but to one who is uninitiated, some of them are very annoying, and others most amusing. When one is wakeful, these sounds start

many trains of thought running through the mind.

If it is wedding music that breaks our slumbers, we are reminded of the shameful expense to which these people go in preparing their wedding feasts, and of the after-struggle, long and toilsome, to pay the debts incurred.

Our sweeper woman, who is a widow, recently held the engagement ceremony for her second son—a boy of about eight. Her salary is thirteen rupees a month, equal to about four dollars. For the occasion she took forty rupees' worth of rice and dal (lentils) from ane maha jan (banker), about the same amount in cloth from some one else, and borrowed eight rupees in cash from a third person. Now, out of her thirteen rupees a month she has to pay five toward the rice and dal, another five toward the cloth, and two toward the money borrowed; leaving her one rupee, or less than forty cents, to live on during the month. This means, of course, that she steals whenever it is possible and even then has almost nothing to eat.

Such thoughts rush madly through our minds, until at length we decide it is time for us to close our eyes and forget it all in sleep, but there

is the thump, thump of the drums, and the jingle, jangle of the discordant music—and our thoughts go rushing on.

Another sound that often rouses us from a sound sleep and sends a feeling of dread to our hearts is the mourning for the dead. No matter what hour of the day or night a person dies, the women of the family at once begin a loud and mournful wail. In the night this doleful sound may sometimes be heard through several villages, and it sends another train of thought rushing through our minds. "Who has gone? Who has passed out into eternity unprepared? To what disease has he fallen victim? What suffering will his passing bring upon those left behind?"

During Ramazan, the Mohammedan's month of fasting, the call for the hour of food sounds out from the masjid (mosque), which is a short distance away. All through this month, the Mohammedans are forbidden to eat or drink during the hours of daylight. When this fast falls in the hot season, as it has for some years past, it involves terrible suffering; yet thousands observe it most rigidly. It is pitiful to see old men, tottering with age, working all day without food or water.

After sunset they are permitted to drink water, and about two o'clock in the morning they have a full meal. Very few own a timepiece of any sort, therefore it is the duty of the maulwi (learned man) to call out the hour of two. When we hear this call, we breathe a prayer that some of these darkened souls will see the futility of torturing themselves to no purpose, catch a vision of the true light, and experience the joy of following in the footsteps of Jesus.

We have become so accustomed to the call of the village watchmen that we hardly notice it, except when something out of the ordinary has occurred; in which instance they often call very lustily for quite a length of time to warn the watchmen of other villages that there are thieves about or that something else has happened.

If we are not too weary, we are amused to hear the singing of the lonely travelers, who often walk at night to avoid the heat of the day. They are very much afraid of ghosts and evil spirits, so they sing as loudly as possible to ward them off and to keep up their courage. Often their songs can be heard a half a mile away.

We had a cook who was dreadfully afraid of ghosts. Although he lived less than a mile from

our house, he would not go home alone if his work kept him until after dark. Sometimes his son came to accompany him, but as this was not always convenient, he plucked up courage and began to go alone. One night, however, just as he was passing through a grove where a ghost was supposed to lurk, a branch broke and fell from one of the trees. This gave poor Miya Din such a fright, that no matter how it inconvenienced his son to come for him, he never went home alone after that.

Our tropical nights are full of the sounds of bird and beast and insect. It is remarkable the number of frogs that suddenly spring up, apparently from nowhere, at the beginning of the rains. After the first shower the fields seem to be alive with them, and their cheerful croaks sound like a rude sort of praise for the much appreciated rain.

One song we dread to hear is that of the mosquito. There are seasons of the year when we are able to sleep without nets. In the summer-time, however, when the mosquitoes begin to sing their lively tunes in our ears, we must deprive ourselves of a little fresh air and sleep under nettings. In this way only can we protect our-

selves from being bitten by them and becoming inoculated with malaria.

Foxes are very numerous in our district, and we often hear their funny little bark as they run about in the fields looking for prey. The howl of the jackal is a melancholy sound, and when one hears it for the first time, it sends the shivers down his back. During the influenza siege it was ghastly to think, when we heard their melancholy howls, that they might be tearing in pieces a human corpse.

The Hindus customarily burn their dead by the riverside, but at that time there were not enough able-bodied people to carry away the dead. Hence, the poor buried their dead in shallow graves in the beds of dried-up ponds, and some of the bodies were not buried at all.

Peacocks, village dogs, rats, and moles help to make the night hours interesting, and sometimes owls join in the chorus. At one time an owl took up its abode in a large mango tree overhanging one room of our house. One of the missionaries, his wife and little son occupied that room, and the natives warned the parents that they must leave it at once or the child would surely die. Like many more enlightened than they, these

people are very superstitious regarding the owl.

Bhola is a religious man living in Badalpur, and night after night he keeps puja (worship) going near his house. The musicians play at least half the night, and the singing that accompanies them can be heard distinctly at quite a distance. To judge by the speed of the singing, one would think they were paid according to the number of songs they could get through in a limited amount of time.

Donkeys also lend their music to liven the hours of the night—especially in certain localities in Allahabad where numbers of dhobis, or washermen live. They use donkeys for carrying the clothes to the river and back again. We once rented a house which was said to be haunted. All the furniture could not be moved in one day, so one of the missionaries and his wife offered to sleep on the veranda at the new house. "And," they said, "perhaps we shall see the ghost."

Some time during the night they were awakened by rather heavy footfalls that seemed to be coming through the house. Looking into the room, they could see a light-colored figure approaching, but it did not seem to be a very tall ghost. When it came near the door, it opened

its mouth, and, oh, what a noise echoed through the empty rooms! The ghost had proved to be only a dhobi's donkey that had wandered in at one of the open doors.

Sometimes we hear a distant sound of squeaking, and being half awake and half asleep, we wonder what new sort of animal it may be. As the sound comes nearer, however, we discover that it is only the dry axle of a heavily laden ox-cart, for Indians, as far as possible, spare their oxen from traveling in the heat of day. Also, much of their plowing after the rainy season—preparatory to sowing wheat and barley—is done at night. Hence, during the night hours we often hear the natives shouting at the poor, half-starved animals, and sometimes we hear the blows of the stick or club on their bony backs.

During the rainy season, and for some time after, we hear the people beating out hemp in the wee hours of the morning. The hemp stalks are cut when perfectly green, tied in bundles, and placed in the numerous ponds of water with which the country is dotted at that time. There they remain until they begin to rot, when the fiber separates easily from the stalk. About two or three o'clock every morning we begin to hear

a regular splash, splash, splash. The men take hold of one end of a handful of stalks and beat the other end on the surface of the water, until the fiber is all gathered into a bunch at the middle of the stalks. This process not only brings a monotonous sound to our ears, but a noxious odor to our nostrils. We do not allow any hemp to be put into the pond near our house, but if the breeze happens to be from the right direction, it brings us the odor of the rotten stalks, either from Barhaiya or Badalpur.

Another sound during the hours of the night is sometimes heard, and it too brings a train of thought in its wake. When a party of Gandhi's followers alight from the night train, oftentimes they go across the fields to Saraon shouting lustily, "*Mahatma Gandhi ki jai,*"—"Glory to the great spirit Gandhi."

Much of the disturbance of our rest could be avoided if we were able to sleep inside the house, but during the long summer, from the first of March until the first of November, this is impossible on account of the heat. From March to June we carry our beds out into the open—sometimes even into the fields away from the house—in the hope of catching a little breeze. We wel-

come the sound of all the voices of the night intermingled, rather than to deprive ourselves of the fresh air God sends to make the heat of a summer night endurable.



The Melon Seller

WHEN PESTILENCE STALKS

"The fell disease on every side
Walks forth with tainted breath;
And pestilence, with rapid stride,
Bestrews the land with death.
O look with pity on the scene
Of sadness and of dread;
And let thine angel stand between
The living and the dead."

THE latter part of June had come, and the much-longed-for rains had failed to arrive. A black cloud occasionally made its appearance, only to float mockingly away. The wind

that blew all day and sometimes a good part of the night resembled nothing so much as a blast from the open door of a furnace. No green thing appeared in the fields, except here and there a patch of sama (grain) which, if well watered, has the peculiar property of being able to withstand the burning winds. As far as the eye could reach, heat waves could be seen rising from the ground. Even the natives who had never thought of wearing shoes before, and whose feet had been toughened on the bottom like thick leather, dreaded to walk on the burning ground.

The birds secluded themselves as deeply as possible among the thick branches of the mango trees. The cattle were hungry, but, rather than venture out into the blazing sunlight to look for the scanty bits of grass upon which they must subsist at this season, they remained under the shade of the trees. People who perforce must be out on the glaring white road were to be pitied, for beside the hot road underfoot, the clouds of burning dust must be endured—blowing mercilessly into their faces and blinding their eyes.

Such weather could not continue long without bringing calamity in its wake. The people in their ignorance ate plentifully of melons and

mangoes, of which there were large crops that year. Very little cooking was done, for were not the mangoes much more tasty than the coarse red rice? Thus it was often the case that each person would eat as many as fifty mangoes, some of which were beginning to decay; afterward drinking a large quantity of water.

One night we heard an awful sound of wailing, coming from the direction of Hajiganj, and the next morning we learned that the Indian's most dreaded enemy had appeared. One man had been snatched away during the night by the much-dreaded cholera, and it was the mourning of the women in his household that we had heard. The following night the Brahmans were feasted, and the red flag denoting the presence of some evil disease was set up. But the people went on with their diet of mangoes and melons just the same. In their opinion, disease is never brought about by the sort of food they eat nor by the filth of their homes, but by the wrath of the gods; therefore, to prevent its spreading, the divine anger must be appeased. A number of people died during the siege of cholera, not only in Hajiganj but in other villages as well; but with the first rain, the disease subsided.

No other sickness strikes such terror to the native heart as cholera. It seizes its victim in the twinkling of an eye. He may appear to be in perfect health in the evening, and before the light of morning lie silent in death. An Indian Christian in Jubbulpore, whose house stood only a few feet from our own, came home from his work one evening apparently as well as usual. About midnight he was stricken with cholera, and the next evening he was gone.

Plague is another dreaded enemy which visits our neighborhood almost every year. This, however, is not so greatly feared as cholera and does not carry away nearly as many victims as it did in former years. Many mud houses standing in ruins to-day were formerly occupied by whole families that were swept away by the plague. About half the town of Siwait was wiped out in this way, and no one takes the trouble to clear away the ruined houses. Every year the rains wash away a few more inches of the mud walls and will eventually level them to the ground.

In former days, the people could not be induced to move out when plague rats died in the house, but they have finally become convinced that the government officials are right in ad-

vising them to get out into the open air. So they gather up any sort of sticks and straw they can find and build little temporary shacks in which they live until the danger is past. As a result of this practice, the death rate from plague has been greatly reduced.

When an outbreak of plague occurs in the city of Allahabad, the government puts up straw huts into which any one is permitted to move who finds dead rats in his house. Some years ago a fire broke out in one of these huts, which happened to be the temporary home of a Mohammedan family. The women belonged to the class who are never allowed to be seen by men outside of their own family, and rather than escape from the burning hut and thus expose themselves to view, they perished in the flames.

One evening we started out to hold a meeting in Sarsa, a village about a mile and a half from our house. On the way we had to pass through a large dried-up pond, on the farther bank of which grew a number of mango trees. Usually this spot was entirely deserted at night, but as we drew near we were surprised to see fires burning cheerfully and people sitting about warming themselves. On reaching the spot we found

there were straw huts on every side. Plague had broken out, and a village had sprung up in a day out there under the trees. The people informed us that we would find Sarsa quite forsaken, adding that we might as well stop with them and hold our meeting.

At another time we set out for Khushinyalpur to hold a village meeting. On our way we had to pass through Hajiganj—a village where as we had already heard, the plague had broken out. We were entirely unprepared, however, for the sight that met our eyes as we approached the place. A large cluster of straw huts had been built as closely together as possible, and when we saw so many people gathered together, we decided to stop there instead of going on to Khushinyalpur. At such a time as this we are able to reach people who would never listen to us under ordinary circumstances. Since these temporary abodes are built entirely of straw, those who sit inside can hear the preaching as well as those who come outside to the meeting; and so we reach them all with the gospel message.

The first time we went to Sadanganj to camp and hold our village meetings, we heard the wo-

men conjecturing among themselves as to why we had come. One was struck with a happy thought and expressed it thus: "It must be there is a plague in their house, and they have come here to get away from it."

The rest all assented: "Yes, yes, that must be it. They have found dead rats in their house. What other reason could they have for leaving their home?" Undoubtedly they spread this report through the village as a fact, but when we began our meetings they learned their mistake.

Smallpox is not feared at all by the Indians, and they take no precautions whatever against it. In fact, they worship this terrible disease and consider that one who is smitten with smallpox is highly honored by the goddess Kali. The patient is kept on a bed of nim leaves, which are considered very cooling to one suffering with fever. Worship is rendered to the goddess Kali, and the space around the bed is kept nicely swept. The disease is seldom fatal among them, and probably not less than one-fourth of the people of our district are pitted or at least spotted with smallpox.

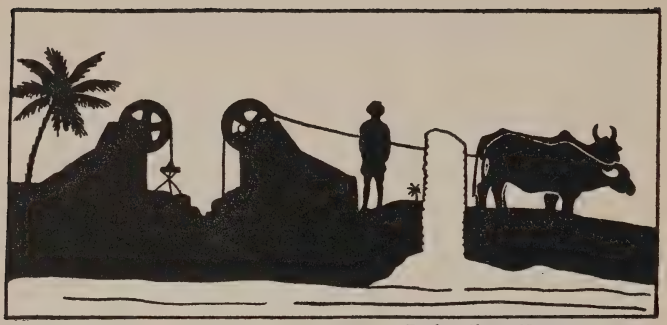
The great epidemic of influenza proved a

terrible scourge in India as in all other parts of the world, but the very habits of these people brought unwarranted disaster upon them. It is characteristic of the natives that they will not consent to lie in bed, even should they possess such an article of furniture. No matter how ill they may be, if they can possibly summon strength to get up and move about, they are certain to do so. In the case of influenza, this practice naturally brought on pneumonia, and the victims died by the hundreds and thousands. The Ganges was so full of dead bodies that a foul odor arose from its waters. While going into Allahabad we counted eighteen bodies floating under the bridge, and no doubt others escaped our notice as we looked from the swiftly moving train. This part of the river is far above the crowded portion of the city, and we wondered what the conditions must have been where the Jumna flows past the burning ghats.

The Hindus very strongly believe that what is to be will be. For this reason, although they have a great dread of sickness and death, it is almost impossible to persuade them to take any precautionary measures.

As in every other peril the missionary faces,

when pestilence stalks through the land, his sole reliance is on God. John G. Paton has said that man is immortal until his work is done. Without presumption, but with faith in God, we take what precautions we can and go forward, trusting in the Lord to preserve our lives until we have finished the task allotted to us.



Irrigating From a Well

DEVOTION TO THE GODS

The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them. —Bible

WE SPENT a most interesting day visiting the Magh Mela, a religious festival, and toward evening went to see the huge image of the god Mahadeo. Maha means "great," and deo "god," and this "great god" is worshiped more widely by the common people, we suppose, than any other deity. Often the people call out as they finish irrigating their fields from the wells, "*Mahadeo ki jai*"—"Glory to Mahadeo." They believe it is he who gives them the water.

When we looked upon this horrible image, astonishment mingled with sorrow at the thought that a human being could worship such an object. We had expected to see the image standing upright, but it lies flat in a pit about ten feet deep. Around it is a cemented drain, because the proper offerings for this god are money and water. Each worshiper brings a small lota or bottle filled with water from the Ganges, and as much money as he can offer. He first throws the money down on the huge image and then pours the water over it. While we stood there, a man went down into the pit by a flight of stairs. With a very stiff broom he swept up the money and put it into a basin. The drains around the image were well filled with pice, annas, four-anna pieces, and even quite a number of rupees. While we were watching, several people came, threw down their money, poured in their lotas of water, and then, bowing profoundly, walked away.

The image itself is about ten feet long, painted red, and the face is the most hideous that can be imagined. If this image represents their idea of a god, no wonder they cannot connect love, purity, and mercy with the thought of

deity. One could never feel drawn to such a god; such a monster could excite only feelings of repulsion.

The most common offering at the many little wayside shrines consists of uncooked rice, flowers, cocoanuts, limes, and pice. The shrines may be marked by an image and a temple, or simply by a rounded stone, on which a little red paint is smeared, placed under a banyan or a pipal tree.

We made the acquaintance of a young man about sixteen years of age who had been brought up in India and had seen much of the manners and customs of the people. He told us how, in times past, he and his boy friends would be on the lookout when the simple people made offerings at these out-of-the-way places, and when the worshipers were gone the boys would slip up and take away the pice before the priests had a chance to get them. Some of these simple folk believe that the gods eat the rice and other food offerings, and that they use the pice, but the more intelligent, when questioned, look ashamed and admit that this is not the case.

In the native portions of towns there are often as many as four or five temples within the

length of a block. Within a distance of half a mile, on one of the lonely hill roads, there are shrines to three deities. Traveling along this road, we come first to the shrine of the goddess Bhagwatai. Next we pass the one to the goddess Durga. This is a queer little place, built in the form of a tiny cave. Inside are three images representing different objects connected with this goddess—one, for instance, the bull upon which she is supposed to ride. Her shrine is always supplied with uncooked rice and fresh flowers. Just across the road from this is a spring in which a water tap has been fixed and a shrine built to the god Vishnu. This spring is not exclusive to Hindus because of the fact that a tap has been installed.

Flowers only are offered at this shrine. There is a rude carving supposed to represent Vishnu. Each of the gods is supposed to travel about on the back of some animal, and although Vishnu is considered one of the greatest of the gods, he rides on the back of the slow-going tortoise.

A man came into our yard and began gathering flowers for an offering, not troubling himself to ask permission. Some one suggested that per-

haps his god would not be pleased with English flowers, and he seemed almost frightened, as if he thought the wrath of the gods might really descend upon him at once. He went away without the flowers.

One day while in Almora, we saw a woman outside in our yard, carrying a basket and apparently picking something from the fine, grassy plot of ground. Moved with curiosity, we went to find out her errand. She was plucking the tiny fresh blades of grass, one by one, and counting them as she put them into her basket. She told us she intended to pluck five thousand of these for an offering to Narayan, that he might grant an abundant harvest. Since then we have seen others following the same strange custom.

A peculiar offering is sometimes noted in the hill country, where certain castes of the Hindus are allowed to eat fowls and eggs. They make a very tiny booth of straw and sticks by the roadside and offer the blood and feathers of fowls and the shells of eggs. We could not help reflecting, "How like the offerings of some so-called Christians!" People the world over wish to offer gifts that are of no use to themselves. We were told that this offering was made to appease the wrath

of the demons supposed to be walking about on the earth and troubling people in various ways. So these people make a feast for themselves and offer that which they cannot eat.

We visited a small temple just above the road on a hillside near Kurseong.On this spot an overhanging rock is held in place only by the roots of the trees which grow about it. The roots have wound themselves about the rock in such a manner that unless the trees give way the rock cannot fall. On the rock there is a very rude carving which is meant to represent the goddess Bhagwatai. Here the usual offerings of flowers, rice, and cocoanuts are placed daily, and beside these, men who are engaged in iron work make small tripods which they offer here that they may have success in their craft. Some of these tripods have a small iron basin attached in which oil is burned on a dirty rag wick. At the time of our visit, in one corner of the temple stood about a hundred of these tripods of various shapes and sizes.

A special puja or worship is held upon the building of a house. A short distance from the place where we were living, a house was completed, and before the owners would occupy it,

they called a Brahman and made a feast. A booth was prepared, in the center of which the offering was spread out. Small offerings had been laid on the wall of the house at different times during the process of building, to insure the success of the work. These offerings were made in the name of the god Narayan.

Even though the building may not be their own, the Hindus feel it incumbent upon them to make these offerings. At the time one of our buildings was being erected, we noticed some earthen jars turned upside down on the unfinished walls. The Hindu builders declared that it meant nothing, but we have since learned that even this is a form of worship. The men knew we would not allow it if we understood what they were doing, so they made their offering secretly and denied its significance.

The digging of a well is another occasion for special offering. When the digging has progressed so far that water is obtained, all work is stopped, a feast is made for all the workmen, and an offering is prepared for the gods, who, they believe, have granted them success. When our own well was being dug, they begged to be allowed to have an offering, which we would not allow.

One afternoon pigs were heard squealing not far from the tent where we were camping. Going out to investigate, we found that two men of the Pasi or hog raisers' caste were each holding a small pig. They said some friends had come to visit them, and they were preparing to make a feast.

The pigs were put through a most interesting process. First their feet were tied; then a place was cleared for the offering, and one man held up a pig while the other poured water over its head. Next the heads were cut off, and marigolds were placed around them. Then the men bowed their heads over them and muttered their incantations. A small fire of dry leaves and sticks was then made, and after the bristles had been scraped off, the pigs were placed whole on the fire and allowed to broil for only a short time. Then they were taken off, cut up, and eaten by the friends who had gathered by that time. Evidently they considered it less important that the flesh be properly cooked than that the puja (worship) be properly performed.

Thus in the punctilious performance of a religious ceremony, no pain is spared. We long to see the day when some of these darkened and de-

luded ones shall cease to lavish their devotion on gods which speak not, see not, and hear not—laying it, instead, at the feet of the Savior of the world.



The Brahman

MOUNTAINS IN THE MISSIONARY'S PATHWAY

Gentlemen, there are no Alps. —Napoleon

"THE Brahman is dead."

Those were Bhagu's words one morning when he appeared for work. We stopped short in astonishment when we heard this strange news, and a great variety of thoughts flashed through our minds; one of which was a prayer

of thanksgiving that so great an obstacle had been removed from our pathway.

"Of what sickness did he die, Bhagu?"

"He died of the plague."

"Are there other cases of plague in Barhaiya?"

"No, there have been no others."

And no other cases developed afterward, which led us to the firm belief that God had taken this wicked man out of the way. We should have been most grateful to see him choose the way of the Cross, but this he would not do, and neither would he allow others to enter into the Kingdom.

We were holding a meeting at Barhaiya one evening and were preaching to a good and attentive audience. We did not know the Brahman was present, but he must have been lurking around some corner, for he was a very large, tall man and could hardly have escaped our notice if he had been there openly. At the close of the meeting we invited the children to attend our Sunday School. Then it was that the Brahman stepped forward, and with a very haughty look on his face, announced that the children of Barhaiya would not be allowed to attend our Sunday School.

He had no children of his own, but being a Brahman he ruled the village. The inhabitants dared not openly do anything contrary to his wish, but some of the Barhaiya children came to Sunday School in spite of his stern mandate. They have attended regularly since that time, and we trust that having heard the gospel in their youth, they may finally find it precious to their souls.

At another time we went with a Hindustani friend to visit the wife of the headman of the village. We sang some bhajans (Hindustani songs) and were having a good opportunity to talk with the women; the men also standing about in the background and listening respectfully. Suddenly the door was darkened, and in stalked the Brahman, singing a lewd and insulting song. The women hid their faces in shame, and even the men turned their backs upon him, showing that they did not approve of his action. They did not wish to have us convert their women to our religion, but they would not use such methods to prevent it.

We knew the Brahman to be the worst enemy in the neighborhood to all gospel effort, so we began to pray that in some way his influence

might be thwarted. In His own time, God took him out of the way in the strange manner already related.

A great obstacle confronting us when we began our soul-saving efforts here was the prevalent idea that we had come to this land to pile up money for ourselves. Most of the Europeans have come for the purpose of making a fortune and living in comfort, and naturally these people thought we had the same object in view. This difficulty has been removed by the example of our daily lives. They see that we are not enriching ourselves, but are helping the poor to the best of our ability, often going without things that most Europeans consider actual necessities.

Another mountain looming up before the missionary in India is the awful depth of sin to which these people have sunk. There are sins commonly practised here which are too terrible to be described in print. A missionary in southern India has told as much as possible in a book entitled, "Things As They Are." When we consider that the very religion of these people teaches them licentiousness, and that their teachers are the most lewd and licentious men, we cannot wonder that the people have reached their pres-

ent state of degradation. These disheartening facts, however, do not discourage us. Suffice it to say, that no matter how black may be the sin, nor how deep-rooted, the power of God, through the blood of Jesus Christ, can effect a perfect cure. Firm in this conviction, we labor on.

Caste is a very great obstacle that rises in the missionary's pathway. It is like a strong steel chain that binds men and women until they are helpless in its coils. Only God can break the chain.

Bhagwan Din says, "I should like to become a Christian, and I intend to some time. I know the Christian way is right, but it is very hard, for I must leave all my family and live absolutely alone. Even my wife will not come with me."

Satna says, "I know your way is right, but my caste people will not even let me draw water from the village well if I become a Christian."

Bikwa, a boy of about fifteen, says, "My caste people will beat me with long bamboos if I become a Christian." He is one of the Barhaiya boys who has been coming to Sunday School for a number of years, and he knows well what he ought to do.

A false conception of sin is deep-rooted in the Hindu's soul. One of our missionaries was speaking in a village meeting, and, wishing to know their idea of the subject, he asked the people to name some acts that they considered sins. One man spoke up saying, "The only sin I know of is to kill a cow."

"But," urged the missionary, "are not lying, stealing, and using bad language sins?"

"Those are bad things, but they are not sins like killing a cow."

Their religion teaches them so, and our part is patiently and prayerfully to teach them the true nature of sin against God and point them to the Savior who is mighty to save and strong to deliver them from its chains.

One great and high mountain that looms up in the way of our leading Hindus and Mohammedans to true repentance is the influence of unconverted Europeans and so-called Indian Christians. They say, "We are as good as your people—why should we change our religion?" Alas, it is quite true. There are numbers who were "born Christians," as they say, and have never known what it is to experience a change of heart. This is true also of many led out of Hinduism by mis-

sionaries who have never known the power of God in their own lives.

An Indian Christian made his appearance one day and announced his desire to join our mission. Upon questioning him, we learned that he had been baptized about six years previously, when he was a young Brahman. He had learned some things in the way of Christian doctrine, but of a change in heart and life he knew nothing. He had left his father's house and had exchanged the cultivator's life for that of a village preacher, but he had obtained no peace and rest of heart. Was the Brahman so much the better by having embraced the mere theory and profession of the Christian religion?

Spirit-filled missionaries of the Cross, who would teach by example as well as by precept, would go far toward removing this mountain. May God look upon His harvest-field and send forth laborers who have been converted and baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. And may some who are here realize that it is high time to awake out of their sleep and work for Jesus, for the night cometh when no man can work.

Is it possible that the mountains looming up in the missionary's pathway may be removed?

"Verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

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